

Martin Vickers, Conservative – Cleethorps

As you know from our previous correspondence when I voted to recognise Palestine am sympathetic to plight of the Palestinian people.

Before having the opportunity to visit both Israel and Gaza I was somewhat more sympathetic to the Israeli position but my views changed as a result of what I saw and after speaking to local people including community leaders, politicians, academics and journalists.

That said we must respect the right of the Israeli State to exist and it must be recognised that one of the chief reasons Western governments are supportive of Israel is that they are a stable country in one of the most troubled parts of the world and they share intelligence that is crucial to our security.

Israel frequently overreacts to attacks by Palestine but when you consider the history we must understand why.

Britain works extremely hard through political and diplomatic channels to maintain stability and to bring the two sides together but the will must also exist at source if peace is to prevail. It's very easy to be sympathetic to one side in any conflict and not see that it is both sides who have their failings.