



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

September 2019.

Dear Constituent,

**A Response to the East Jerusalem & West Bank Settlements Campaign**

Thank you for contacting me about settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

I share your concerns about the settlement expansion in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. That is why I firmly support the UK's longstanding position on the Middle East Peace Process.

There should be a negotiated settlement leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state, based on 1967 borders with agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states, and a fair and realistic settlement for refugees. The UK Government consistently calls for an immediate end to all actions that undermine the viability of the two-state solution. This includes terrorism, anti-Semitic incitement, settlement expansion, and the demolition of Palestinian property in the West Bank.

Demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians, call into question Israel's commitment to a viable two-state solution, and, in all but the most exceptional of cases, are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. I am glad the UK Government funds a number of projects to monitor and report on settlement expansion in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and to protect vulnerable Palestinian communities from the effects of settlement expansion. The UK Embassy in Tel Aviv also discussed concerns about the increase in demolitions in East Jerusalem with the Israeli Authorities on 25 June.

The UK and Israel have a strong and important trading relationship and I am firmly opposed to boycotts or sanctions. The UK Government does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including the settlements, as part of Israel and they are not covered by the current EU-Israel Association Agreement, which governs UK trade with Israel. It is up to individual businesses whether they undertake business dealings with companies operating in illegal settlements. The UK Government neither supports nor encourages such dealings. The Foreign Office advises businesses on the risks of so doing.

At this highly sensitive time in the region, there is an urgent need to restart the peace process between Israel and Palestine. I would urge both parties to resume direct negotiations towards a two-state solution.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alister Jack'.

**The Rt. Hon. Alister Jack MP**  
Dumfries and Galloway constituency.