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Israel: Campaign against Travel Bans affecting Campaigning Organisations

Thank you for contacting me about Israel and the policy of preventing representatives of various campaigning organisations from entering the country.

I welcome the fact that the UK Government continues to support a range of projects and organisations in the Palestinian Territories and Israel which focus on promoting human rights, dialogue and coexistence.

I am clear that the UK Government is deeply committed to promoting our trade and business ties with Israel and accordingly is strongly opposed to the Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Movement.

I do not believe that imposing sanctions on Israel would be a constructive step. The UK enjoys a productive relationship with Israel which enables the Government to express our views at senior levels very frankly. The Government also believes that the best way for Israel to combat the BDS movement is through discussion and debate rather than proscription.

I am aware that British Government officials raised the recent publication of a list of organisations that may be subject to Israeli proscription with the Israeli Ambassador on 8 January and made clear the UK's position. Officials from the British Embassy in Tel Aviv have also raised the matter with the Israeli authorities.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP