Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

UNRWA

Andrew Percy (Conservative) [92870] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment the Government has made of the long-term financial implications of the UN Relief and Works Agency’s entitled beneficiaries.

James Cleverly: The UK is a long-term supporter of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). We are working with UNRWA to improve their financial viability. This includes broadening UNRWA's donor base, encouraging the full disbursement of pledges and encouraging support through multi-year funding. I reiterated this at the International Conference on UNRWA on 16 November. https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-14/92870

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

It is only through dialogue that we can improve stability across the Middle East: Statement by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at the Security Council briefing on the Middle East peace process

… Just last week, we were horrified to see attacks on three Israeli citizens near Nablus, in which a young man lost his life. Our hearts go out to the family of Yehuda Dimentman. We fully support Israel's right to ensure its security and bring the perpetrators to justice. The report [of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process see below] also highlights the acute risks to stability facing the region, and the need to ease tensions. These include the immediate financial crises facing both the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA; the rising tension in East Jerusalem and Sheikh Jarrah following a number of violent attacks; and an increase in settler violence against Palestinians. We call on all parties to urge calm and prevent this cycle of violence.

Mr President, the UK continues to urge the Government of Israel to permanently end its settlement expansion and settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
The plans to advance construction in E1, and the demolitions and evictions affecting the Palestinian populations in East Jerusalem and Area C, directly threaten the viability of a future Palestinian state. We welcome the decision by the Jerusalem district planning committee to postpone the decision to construct housing units in Atarot beyond the 1967 lines. We urge the Israeli authorities not to move forward with these plans.

Mr President, we must not forget the toll this prolonged conflict has taken on the people of Gaza. As our Minister for the Middle East set out on 17 December, the UK is proud to have provided $2.6m to UNICEF to launch their Child Sensitive Cash Assistance Programme in Gaza – to help vulnerable households, especially children, access basic services. We do welcome the positive progress made this year to improve relations between the parties and encourage dialogue at a senior and ministerial level. We encourage further progress in this regard. …

Mr President, as we look towards a new calendar year, we urge a continuation of increased dialogue between the parties and a reversal of the negative trends we have heard about today. It is only through dialogue that we can improve stability across the region and build the foundations for peace. The UK remains firmly committed to a two-state solution, based on 1967 lines and with Jerusalem as a shared capital. …

To read the full transcript see
https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/it-is-only-through-dialogue-that-we-can-improve-stability-across-the-middle-east

United Nations

If Left Unchecked, Rising Violence, Unilateral Activities in Occupied Palestinian Territory Could Undermine Fragile Stability, Briefer Warns Security Council

… Tor Wennesland, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, expressed continuing concern over the deteriorating security situation in the occupied West Bank, particularly in East Jerusalem. Ongoing unilateral steps — such as Israeli settlement, advancement and demolition activities — further exacerbate the situation and undermine the institutional stability of the Palestinian Authority. If left unchecked, the situation in the West Bank could deteriorate further, also impacting the situation in Gaza and underlining the cessation of hostilities that has held since May, he emphasized. …

Turning to positive developments, he noted that local council elections occurred on 11 December in West Bank communities, in which over 25 per cent of candidates were women. On 12 December, the Central Election Commission announced the start of preparations for a second round of municipal elections, to be held in March 2022.

"Israeli settlement remains deeply concerning", he stressed … Such activities constitute a flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions and international law … Further, the deterioration of the security and socioeconomic situations across the Occupied Palestinian Territory must be reversed, and all parties must avoid unilateral steps that change the realities on the ground. …

Stressing that the rising levels of violence seen in recent weeks “should be a clear warning to us all”, he stated that — if left unchecked — festering drivers of conflict will lead to yet another destructive, bloody round of violence. …

Richard M. Mills, Jr (United States) expressed concern over rising tensions in the West Bank and in and around Jerusalem, especially against civilians and urged authorities to condemn violence and respond in a proportionate and reasonable manner. Such episodes risk precipitating even more violence, he said, calling on Israelis and Palestinians to refrain from any action which would undercut advancement of the two-State solution, including demolitions, settlement expansion and eviction from homes, and compensate those imprisoned for acts of terrorism. …
Dmitry A. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) said that general improvement in the situation in the Middle East region is impossible without a solution to the Palestinian problem. The situation is complicated by unilateral actions — expropriation and destruction of Palestinian property, settlement construction, arbitrary arrests, violation of the status of the Holy Sites and incitement to violence. … He called on the parties to resume the peace process on a universally-recognized international legal basis that includes the two-State formula. …

Nicolas De Rivière (France) affirmed that only the two-State solution with recognized borders along 1967 lines with both parties having Jerusalem as their capital can fulfil the aspirations of both peoples. … The positive trend of previous months has been jeopardized by unilateral actions, firstly by Israeli settlement expansion. … Israel’s designation of six Palestinian humanitarian non-governmental organizations as terrorist groups — including one that received a human rights prize from France — represents a dwindling of space for civil society in Palestine. Palestinian authorities must also bolster democratic governance. …

Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom) [see above to read this speech in more detail] calling on all parties to actively prevent the cycle of violence, reported that her Government continues to urge the Government of Israel to permanently end its settlement expansion and settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. … Urging a continuation of increased dialogue between the parties to improve stability across the region, she expressed her country’s firm commitment to a two-State solution, based on 1967 lines and with Jerusalem as a shared capital. …

Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland), spotlighting that there are now an estimated 800,000 people now housed in illegal settlements, called on Israel to halt all settlement activity, including in the sensitive areas of E1, Atarot and Givat Hamatos. Further, 2021 has seen a record high number of Palestinians affected by demolitions, evictions and confiscations, with Palestinian families in Silwan, Sheikh Jarrah and al-Walajeh being confronted with a looming legal deadline. … In 2021, the Israeli Security Forces in the West Bank killed 72 Palestinians, including 17 children, using live ammunition. She also said she was deeply disturbed by the surge in violence in the West Bank, including attacks in Jerusalem and the killing of civilians. …

To read the full press release see

Other Relevant Information

Muslim Doctors Association and The Grey Area

Excluded on the Frontline: Discrimination, Racism and Islamophobia in the NHS

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867
Assisted Dying Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875

Charities Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877

Education (Assemblies) Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862

Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3025

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3017

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2900

Nationality and Borders Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023

Online Safety Bill (Draft)  
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill  
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2942

Northern Ireland Assembly

Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill  

Consultations  ** new or updated today

** closes today

Proosed Assisted Dying for Terminally ill Adults (Scotland) Bill (closing date 22 December 2021)  

Animal Welfare – revision of EU legislation (Food Safety) (closing date 21 January 2022)  
The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438

Outdoor marriages and civil partnerships (closing date 24 January 2022)

Marriage Law (Northern Ireland) (closing date 18 February 2022)

Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights (closing date 8 March 2022)