



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



**Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State at the Foreign,
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**Prime Minister's Special
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Caroline Lucas MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our ref: MC2022/27429
Your ref: ML.N0004.SS.21.10.22
23 November 2022

Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 October to the Foreign Secretary on behalf of your constituent about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I am replying as the Minister of State for the Middle East.

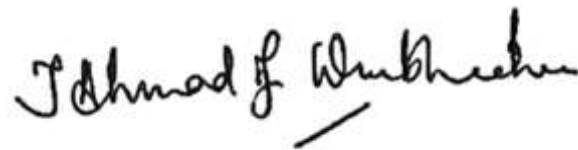
The British Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of regularised access to healthcare with the Israeli authorities. We recognise that under International Humanitarian Law, Israel, as the occupying power, has a duty of ensuring and maintaining public health to the fullest extent of the means available to it. The wounded and ill in Gaza and the West Bank should be able to access the urgent medical care they need.

The UK continues to monitor closely the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza, further exacerbated by recent conflict and damages to civilian infrastructure. The UK is providing life-saving aid to Palestinian refugees in Gaza and across the region. In 2021 we provided over £27m in support to UNRWA, including £4.9m to their flash appeal following the Gaza conflict in May. Our annual contribution to their programme budget helps UNRWA provide education to over 533,000 children a year (half of them girls), and access to health services for 3.5m Palestinian refugees.

We urge access into and out of Gaza, in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, for humanitarian actors, reconstruction materials, and those, including Palestinians, travelling for medical purposes. We are in close contact with UN agencies and key partners on the ground to assess the situation and will monitor closely. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv and our Consulate-General in Jerusalem frequently urge the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to take steps to improve conditions in Gaza, including easing movement and access restrictions.

We must continue to address immediate humanitarian needs in Gaza, and work towards a longer-term solution for recovery and reconstruction. The situation on the ground demonstrates the urgent need to make progress towards peace. The UK remains committed to the Two-State Solution as the best way to bring peace and stability to the region.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON

Minister of State

Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict