



DEBATE PACK

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Humanitarian situation in Gaza

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

Following Hamas' seizure of Gaza in June 2007, Israel imposed an economic blockade on Gaza. Hamas is a Palestinian militant Islamist movement whose political wing is the governing authority in the Gaza Strip. Hamas' military wing is proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the UK government.

Egypt also sealed its border with Gaza in 2007, reopening the border only occasionally on humanitarian grounds. Both countries continue to control the flow of commercial goods and people in and out of the territory.

Israel has allowed humanitarian food and medical supplies to enter Gaza. It also delivers oil and fuel for vehicles, industry and power stations. However, all those supplies are limited. Humanitarian agencies, including the UN, argue that the economic blockade undermines the quality of health, education, and water and sanitation services available in Gaza.¹

Some of these restrictions were eased in 2010, and in 2014 – following the conflict in Gaza – Israel agreed to ease some of the remaining restrictions. Specifically, Israel agreed to:

- open more of its border crossings with Gaza to allow the easier flow of goods, including humanitarian aid and reconstruction equipment, into the coastal enclave;
- allow Palestinians to fish in waters up to six miles off the coast of Gaza (as opposed to three miles previously). The Palestinians sought an extension to twelve miles.²

Oxfam summarises the effects of the blockade on the territory:

It has devastated Gaza's economy, caused widespread destruction and left most people largely cut off from the outside world.

The humanitarian needs are enormous. People struggle to access clean water, food, medical care, education and to rebuild their homes. The blockade prevents most of them from leaving Gaza or trading with the outside world and markets in the West Bank, and restricts vital reconstruction material from entering.

80 percent of the population rely on humanitarian aid to survive. Many key industries have been decimated and more than 60 percent of youth are unemployed - the highest rate in the world.³

The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) is the branch of the Israeli Defence Ministry that deals with Palestinian civilian affairs in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. They state that Israel works in the background "to promote civil policies in order to assist the

residents of Gaza.” This is despite the fact, COGAT says, that Hamas “continuously attempts to take advantage of the civil steps promoted by Israel,” including abusing the permits given to Gazans “to transfer terror funds, weapons, instructions and intelligence to perform terror attacks in Israel.”⁴

The Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority (PA) has also in the last few years used a series of restrictions to try and coerce Hamas into allowing the PA to once again control the territory. The PA started in 2017 to curb electricity supplies and restrict medical referrals to Israel. Combined with the Israeli/Egyptian blockades they precipitated a severe humanitarian crisis in the territory, which continues to this day.⁵ Talks between Fatah and Hamas remain stalled, despite a joint reconciliation agreement the two parties signed in October 2017.⁶

In the last few months there has been a series of clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces, focused on the Gaza-Israel border.

The recent violence started on 30 March. Palestinian activists decided to stage weekly protests, every Friday, up to 15 May. This date was significant as it was the 70th annual commemoration of what Palestinians call the “Nakba”, or Catastrophe, marking the event when hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people were displaced in the hostilities which followed Israel's creation in 1948. These protests have been dubbed the ‘March of the return.’ The protests have continued since 15 May, though not at the same scale.

Israel maintains that the protests have been hijacked by Hamas. On 30 March the *Times of Israel* quoted an Israeli Defence Force (IDF) spokesman as saying: “terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip use these violent riots in order to camouflage terror.”⁷

The clashes on the Gaza border have resulted in a large number of casualties and deaths, the most since the 2014 Gazan conflict. According to the latest figures from the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), since 30 March, 135 Palestinians have been killed and just over 7,800 people required hospital treatment.⁸ 3,895 of those injuries resulted from the use of live ammunition.

The source of the OCHA data is the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza, part of the Hamas-controlled political authority in the territory.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ ‘[Three babies die as Gaza rivalry grows](#)’; The Times, 29 June 2017

⁶ ‘[Egypt fails to gather PA, Hamas for reconciliation talks](#)’, Middle East Monitor, 20 April 2018.

⁷ ‘[Abbas says Israel fully to blame as death toll in Gaza clashes rises to 15](#)’, Times of Israel, 30 March 2018.

⁸ The OCHA includes this caveat alongside these figures: “*This figure includes 17 Palestinians (two of them children) killed in unclear circumstances during the 14 May demonstrations, as well as 17 Palestinians (including one child) killed since 30 March in contexts other than demonstrations; among the latter are six people whose bodies are being reportedly withheld by the Israeli authorities*”.

Partly because of the suggested partiality of the Ministry of Health, the OCHA casualty figures are disputed by some.⁹ A senior Hamas official also claimed in May that the majority of the Palestinians killed in the border violence were affiliated to Hamas.¹⁰ However, this claim was later disputed by a spokesman for the group, who said that while Hamas paid for the funerals of all 50, this was “whether they are members or supporters of Hamas, or unrelated to the factions.”¹¹

These casualties have put a huge strain on the Gazan health facilities, which were already struggling with the effects of the various blockades of the territory.

The OCHA’s [April humanitarian bulletin](#) said the Gazan health system was “on the verge of collapse.” The May bulletin describes:

Gaza’s already overstretched health sector has been struggling to cope with the mass influx of casualties. This burden has exacerbated the long-term shortage of medicines and limited capacities of health facilities, driven by the huge electricity deficit and the ongoing salary crisis affecting government employees, among other reasons.¹²

The bulletin also mentions a recent survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), which reveals that poverty rates in Gaza increased from 38.8 per cent in 2011 to 53 per cent by the end of 2017, affecting one million people, including over 400,000 children.¹³

The UNRWA, which is the UN agency responsible for relief work for Palestinian refugees, has seen its assistance programmes put under greater strain due to a decision in January 2018 by the United States to cut its funding of the agency. The US was the organisation’s largest donor.¹⁴ President Trump [linked](#) the decision to the lack of involvement of the PA in the US’ peace initiatives. This stance was [supported](#) by Nikki Haley, America’s Ambassador to the UN.

However, later that month, officials for the US State Department said funding had been cut because of concerns over how the UNRWA operates, and linked restoring US funding to the organisation undergoing reforms. They also stated the US was providing too much of the UNRWA budget and called for other nations to increase their funding.¹⁵

⁹ See, for example, comments from an IDF spokesman Lt. Colonel Jonathan Conricus in [‘Israel Kills Dozens at Gaza Border as U.S. Embassy Opens in Jerusalem](#), New York Times, 14 May 2018.

¹⁰ [‘Hamas official: 50 of the 62 Gazans killed in border violence were our members’](#), Times of Israel, 16 May 2018

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² OCHA, [‘Humanitarian Bulletin occupied Palestinian territory- May 2018’](#), 5 June 2018.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ UNRWA, [Pledges to UNRWA’s Programmes \(Cash and In-kind\) - Overall Donor Ranking](#), 2017.

¹⁵ [‘Tillerson prevails over Haley in Palestinian funding debate’](#), Washington Post, 16 January 2018.

2. Press Articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[**Kushner and Greenblatt meet Netanyahu, set to discuss U.S. peace plan**](#)

Jerusalem Post
22 June 2018

[**Israel strikes Hamas after heavy rocket attack from Gaza**](#)

The Globe and Mail (Canada)
Ian Deitch
20 June 2018

[**Cash-strapped UN refugee agency to cut back operations in Gaza**](#)

Times of Israel
19 June 2018

[**Security Cabinet meets, makes no decision on humanitarian crisis in Gaza**](#)

Jerusalem Post
Herb Keinon, and Tovah Lazaroff
11 June 2018

[**'Jerusalem Day' protests: Three Palestinians die as violence on Gaza-Israel border resumes**](#)

Independent
Bethan McKernan
8 June 2018

[**Netanyahu: Israel wants to stave off 'humanitarian collapse' in Gaza**](#)

Times of Israel
4 June 2018

[**Hamas says armed groups agree to Gaza ceasefire if Israel reciprocates**](#)

Guardian
30 May 2018

[**Tensions rise as Gaza militants fire more than 70 mortars, rockets into Israel**](#)

Washington Post
Ruth Eglash and Hazem Balousha
29 May 2018

[**Israel and Gaza trade heaviest fire since 2014 war**](#)

Guardian
Oliver Holmes
29 May 2018

3. Press Releases

[Foreign Secretary meets Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: 6 June 2018](#)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office 6 June 2018

Today, Wednesday 6 June, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in London to discuss the UK Government's commitment to the Iran nuclear deal and its concerns over the deteriorating situation in Gaza.

The Foreign Secretary condemned incitement and rocket fire against Israel. He reiterated the need for Israel to carry out a transparent, independent inquiry into the loss of more than 120 Palestinian lives during the recent Gaza protests, as well as over 10,000 injuries, with approximately 4,000 of these as a result of live gun fire.

He stressed the UK's firm commitment to a two-state solution as the best way to bring about stability and peace in the region.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK, alongside France and Germany, firmly believes that the Iran nuclear deal is the best way to ensure a safe, secure future for the region.

We are committed to making sure Iran continues to abide by its obligations under the deal and are in full agreement with Israel that we must prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

We are also very concerned by the deaths of over 120 Palestinians in recent weeks and the deteriorating situation in Gaza. The people of Israel and Gaza have the right to live safely in peace, without constant fear for their security.

We continue to press both Israel and the Palestinian Authority on the need to refrain from actions which make peace more difficult. Settlement construction is a significant barrier to achieving this goal, as are terrorism, incitement to violence, and the refusal by some to acknowledge Israel's right to exist.

The UK has an unwavering commitment to Israel's security and stability and we look forward to continuing to work together to achieve our common goals.

[Condemning attacks from Gaza into Israel and calling for direct negotiations for two-state solution](#)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

30 May 2018

Statement by Ambassador Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN, at the Security Council briefing on the Middle East.

Thank you very much indeed Madam President and thank you to the Special Co-ordinator for that very sobering briefing.

Echoing Ambassador Haley's concern, I condemn without qualification, in the strongest terms, yesterday's mortar and rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel. Indiscriminate attacks against civilians are unacceptable and they are unjustifiable. Those that risk killing or injuring children are heinous. These attacks can't be ignored by the Council. The UK fully supports Israel's right to self-defense and the right to defend their citizens from such acts of terror. The recent spike in rocket attacks from Gaza is a stark reminder that the risk of a renewed conflict is very much present and I think the Special Co-ordinator brought that out very starkly in his briefing today. The latest attacks follow the deaths of over a hundred Palestinians in recent weeks of protests, and the Council has addressed that previously. Civilians live in fear and in despair. Further escalation of violence risks a devastating effect on efforts to restore the peace process and can only bring renewed suffering for the region. As Council members, we should act to ensure that this doesn't come to fruition.

The situation in Gaza, Madam President, is undeniably dangerous, it is sad and it is complex. The perpetual cycle of violence needs to end and serves no one's interests. The actions of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad represent real and concerning threat to Israeli security. Ultimately, the ongoing decisions of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad to embrace violence and reject the Quartet principles lie at the heart of the Gaza situation. We should use this Council session today to demand that Hamas and other terrorist groups cease all violent and provocative actions and cease any and all actions that put civilian lives at risk.

At the same time, we do not ignore the significant contribution that restrictions on movement and access imposed on Gaza have on the dire humanitarian situation that we witness. The United Kingdom continues its support for the full return of the Palestinian Authority to Gaza, and we encourage further progress on reconciliation.

An end to this violence requires a tangible path for changing Gaza and what the Special Coordinator had to say about the plan was very interesting. We believe it's the responsibility of the international community to work together to find a way to alleviate the humanitarian suffering in Gaza. We welcome the proposals that Mr Mladenov has made, and these include commitments to advance urgent infrastructure and economic development projects to improve access and movement and to support the Egyptian-led reconciliation process.

We stand ready as the United Kingdom to do everything that we can to support these efforts. The people of Gaza are in urgent and they're in desperate need. Yesterday, my government committed to providing a new package of over two million dollars of lifesaving support. The funding will support work by the International Committee of the Red Cross Red Crescent in keeping hospitals open and functioning at a time when the healthcare system in Gaza is under huge strain.

But ultimately Madam President, peace will come only through fresh negotiations between the parties, supported by the international community. Every day makes it more critical that both Israelis and Palestinians return to direct negotiations and urgently prioritise steps to resolve the situation in Gaza. This is the only way that we will be able to achieve a two-state solution: a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state. Those who seek to undermine this, including through unjustified acts of violence, deserve the rightful condemnation of this Council, but also the condemnation of the whole world.

Thank you Madam President.

[UK aid to provide vital medicine and surgical equipment to struggling hospitals in Gaza](#)

**Department for International Development / Foreign and Commonwealth Office
29 May 2018**

The UK is providing a new package of life-saving support to help treat patients in 11 hospitals under pressure in Gaza, by restocking vital medical supplies including surgical equipment, bandages and medicines following the recent surge in violence.

The funding, announced by Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt today (Tuesday 29 May) on a visit to Gaza, will support work by the International Committee of the Red Cross to keep hospitals open and functioning at a time when the healthcare system is under huge strain.

Today's commitment of £1.5 million will also help provide physical rehabilitation services for around 4,000 people.

Speaking from Gaza, Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt said:

I am deeply concerned about the worsening situation in the Gaza strip, and today's UK aid package gives a message to the world, and to the people of Gaza, that we have not forgotten them or their plight.

Today's support will help to ensure that hospitals which are under immense pressure are able to cope with the increased number of casualties who need medical and surgical care. It is absolutely vital that the UK steps up to help those suffering and ensure that vulnerable Gazans are able to access treatment to keep them alive.

We have been clear that a political settlement is the only way to ensure lasting peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike. All parties must redouble their political efforts and return to the negotiating table, not only to address the deteriorating conditions in Gaza, but to ensure tragedies of the past months are not repeated.

UK support is already providing Gazans with access to clean water, and improving sanitation facilities to help stop the spread of deadly disease.

Through the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA), UK aid is providing basic health and education to 1.3 million people in Gaza, as well as over 800,000 refugees in the West Bank.

Minister Burt announced in March at the Rome Conference that the UK will deliver its next round of financial support to UNRWA earlier than originally planned to help meet the growing needs of Palestinian refugees across the region.

Violence in Gaza on 14 May 2018: UK response

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

14 May 2018

The UK's Minister for the Middle East, Alistair Burt issued a statement after numerous Palestinians were killed and injured in Gaza and the West Bank in protests that erupted after the opening of the US embassy in Jerusalem.

Alistair Burt said:

The violence today in Gaza and the West Bank has been shocking. The loss of life and the large number of injured Palestinians is tragic, and it is extremely worrying that the number of those killed continues to rise.

Such violence is destructive to peace efforts. We have been clear that the UK supports the Palestinians' right to protest, but these protests must be peaceful.

It is deplorable that extremist elements may have been seeking to exploit these protests for their own violent purposes. We will not waver from our support for Israel's right to defend its borders. But the large volume of live fire is extremely concerning. We continue to implore Israel to show greater restraint.

The UK remains committed to a two-state solution with Jerusalem as a shared capital. All sides now need to show real leadership and courage, promote calm, refrain from inflaming tensions further, and show with renewed urgency that the path to a two-state solution is through negotiation and peace.

[Urgent need for renewed negotiations to help end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict](#)

**Foreign and Commonwealth Office
26 April 2018**

Statement by Ambassador Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN, at the Security Council Open Debate on the Middle East and the peace process.

Thank you very much indeed Mr President, and thank you to the Special Representative for his briefing, and to the two other speakers.

I think it's obvious, Mr President, that the ongoing violence on Gaza's borders have made the past weeks especially challenging for all those of us who are committed to pursuing a revived Middle East Peace Process. For the United Kingdom, we are deeply concerned by the recent increase in violence and by the resulting high number of Palestinians killed and injured. And we would continue to strongly urge Israel to show restraint in their response to the protest, but for all actors to abide by their obligations under international law. And in particular, along with Ambassador Haley, we reiterate the importance of protecting minors.

That said, it is crystal clear that Hamas and their operatives have been exploiting these protests for their own benefit. Israel has the right to secure itself against Hamas and other terrorist groups.

Given the importance of accountability, we are supportive of an independent and transparent investigation. We therefore welcome Israel's commitment to investigate the conduct of operations. We would urge that its findings be made public and if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account.

The immediate concern, Mr President, has to be preventing further violence. We urge all parties to show maximum restraint and to do whatever they can to prevent further escalation and the loss of life. In particular, we urge Israelis to reconsider the use of live fire, and we urge the Palestinian leadership to maintain their calls for non-violent protests. Palestinians have a fundamental right to protest peacefully, but those with influence over Hamas must make clear that the use of violence and aggressive tactics is unacceptable and it will do nothing to further the Palestinian cause.

The violence has sadly put added strain on the already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza. This is particularly true of the health sector and this was already operating far beyond capacity. The parties, Mr President, need to do all they can to address the underlying causes of the dire economic and humanitarian situation. We look to Israel to lift its movement and access restrictions on people and goods including urgently granting medical permits. While we welcome last week's short reopening of the Rafah crossing, we urge Egypt to open it on a more permanent basis in order to ease the suffering of ordinary citizens in Gaza. And Hamas needs to decide whether it is prepared to work for the good of the Gazan people and join efforts in peace, or whether it

will continue to use terror and neglect the basic needs of Gaza's population.

The international community has an important role to play in improving the humanitarian situation, and this includes the continued support to UNRWA, as this provides essential services to some of the most vulnerable Palestinian refugees.

The situation in Gaza could, we believe, be radically improved through the return of the Palestinian Authority. The United Kingdom remains strongly supportive of a Hamas Fatah reconciliation and this would see the PA resuming government functions in Gaza and restoring effective and accountable governance. We welcome Egypt's facilitation role and would like to encourage them to help the parties discuss the most difficult issues, such as security.

The Special Coordinator, Mr Mladenov, has shown outstanding leadership on both reconciliation and on progressing access and projects to improve the situation in Gaza. And as ever, Mr President, I'd like to reiterate that the United Kingdom stands ready to assist him.

Like many worthwhile things, the process towards peace requires much patience. But we know from history that violence will not help us to achieve this ultimate goal and the conflict will only be resolved through a political process to a two-state solution. There is an urgent need for renewed negotiations that can end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and deliver peace and safe, secure and sovereign homes for both Palestinians and for Israelis and the United Kingdom again will be committed to doing all we can to support that goal.

Mr President,

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be seen in isolation from the many other conflicts in the Middle East. Israel's security, let alone her existence, should not be put at risk by any UN member state. The missile build-up in Syria and elsewhere offers the clear risk of escalation, and a slide in to further violence in Israel and the occupied territories would have a significant detrimental effect on stability in the wider region. I would like to take this opportunity, Mr President, to recall since the JCPOA agreement has been mentioned by the Israeli Ambassador, I would like to recall that the United Kingdom's position on that agreement is clear and remains clear. We believe it is a crucial agreement that makes the world safer and contributes to regional and global security by neutralizing the threat of a nuclear armed Iran. And we engage all partners as we take discussions on the JCPOA forward.

Thank you Mr President.

4. PQs

Gaza: Health Services and Sanitation

04 Jun 2018 | 147781

Asked by: Sir Nicholas Soames

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support the Government has provided for healthcare and sanitation in Gaza in each of the last three years.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

In 2018/19, the UK is providing £1.5 million to support the International Committee of the Red Cross appeal. This support will help to treat patients in 11 hospitals under pressure in Gaza, by restocking vital medical supplies following the recent surge in violence.

In 2017/18 the UK provided £1.9 million to support the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Gaza urgent funding appeal. This is delivered through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support critical water and sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. This support will continue until September 2018.

In each of the last three years the UK helped to provide basic health services to 1.3 million people in Gaza through our long-term support of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).

Gaza: International Assistance

04 Jun 2018 | 147780

Asked by: Sir Nicholas Soames

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will support the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs' humanitarian funding appeal for Gaza.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

I recently visited Gaza and saw the dire situation that Gazans face on a daily basis. We are providing new humanitarian support of £1.5 million through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which is not covered by the UN Appeal. ICRC activities include support to patients in 11 hospitals under pressure in Gaza, by restocking vital medical supplies following the recent surge in violence.

Last year, the UK provided £1.9 million to support the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Gaza urgent funding appeal. This is delivered through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support critical water and sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. This support will continue until September 2018.

Israel: Arms Trade**22 May 2018 | 145278****Asked by: Ann Clwyd**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what role his Department plans to play in reviewing UK arms exports to Israel as a result of the events in Gaza of 14 May 2018.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

We assess all applications very carefully against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria and human rights and international humanitarian law considerations are important parts of that assessment. We have no information to suggest that UK supplied equipment has been used in contravention of the Criteria. We continue to keep the situation under constant review.

Palestinians: Refugees**22 May 2018 | 144394****Asked by: Rosie Duffield**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what plans the Government has made to provide humanitarian support for a potential increase in Palestinian refugees across the Middle East as a result of the recent violence in Gaza.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

We are not aware of an increase in the number of internally displaced persons within Gaza, or an increase in the number of refugees in the region, as a result of the recent violence on the Israel-Gaza border. However, more than 22,500 people remain displaced in Gaza since the 2014 conflict.

The UK is a long term supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) which supports Palestinian refugees across the region, including those displaced in Gaza, through the provision of: basic education to around 500,000 children; health services for around 3 million Palestinian refugees; social assistance for approximately 280,000 of the poorest Palestinian refugees; and a source of income for almost 30,000 refugees working for UNRWA. The UK will deliver its next round of financial support earlier than originally planned to meet the growing needs of Palestinian refugees across the region.

Refugees: Palestinians

21 May 2018 | 144395

Asked by: Rosie Duffield

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans the Government has to support Palestinian refugees seeking to enter the UK as a result of recent violence in Gaza.

Answering member: Caroline Nokes | Department: Home Office

We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza and are closely monitoring the situation. We are working closely with UN agencies and others to respond to ongoing needs in Gaza, including supporting up to 1 million Gazans by addressing critical water and sanitation needs through UNICEF. The UK is also a long-term supporter of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, which provides basic services to 1.3 million people in Gaza, including basic health care.

There are safe and legal routes for people to come to the UK should they wish to join family members here, work or study. They would need to meet the requirements of the relevant Immigration Rule under which they were applying to qualify for a visa. Details about the criteria and how to apply are available on the GOV.UK website at: <http://www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa>.

However, there are no specific provisions in the Immigration Rules for people to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum. Those who need international protection should claim in the first safe country they reach or register with mandated UN agencies – that is the fastest route to safety.

Gaza: Hamas

09 May 2018 | HL7217

Asked by: Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, they plan to take in response to the actions of Hamas in Gaza, including discrimination against women, public executions and other human rights breaches as reported by the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon
| Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

The UK proscribes the military wing of Hamas and maintains a no contact policy with Hamas in its entirety and condemns its acts contrary to human rights. The UK's position on Hamas is clear: Hamas must renounce violence, recognise Israel and accept previously signed agreements. Hamas faces a fundamental decision about whether it is prepared to join efforts for peace, or whether it will continue to use terror and anti-Semitic incitement, with all the terrible consequences for the people of Gaza and Israel. The UK is supportive of the Palestinian Authority fully resuming government functions in Gaza, helping to improve the economic and humanitarian situation and ease the suffering of ordinary Gazans.

Gaza: Borders**08 May 2018 | 140144****Asked by: Jo Stevens**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the potential humanitarian effect of expanding the capacity of the Kerem Shalom goods crossing between Gaza and Israel.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

Humanitarian agencies currently have to devote considerable time, resource, and effort to coordinating the passage of humanitarian goods and personnel through crossings between Israel and Gaza. Kerem Shalom is the only crossing for goods to enter and exit Gaza via Israel. In 2017 an average of 218 trucks a month were leaving Gaza into Israel, compared to a monthly average of 961 trucks between January and July in 2007. This severely constrains the economic development of Gaza, which contributes to the dire humanitarian situation. By operating Kerem Shalom at capacity, humanitarian and essential goods would be able to reach the intended beneficiaries in a more timely and cost-effective manner. This would expedite the delivery of humanitarian relief to those in need, helping to save lives and reduce suffering. The UK regularly raises the need to ease trade, movement and access restrictions with the Government of Israel, in line with their legitimate security concerns, and urges Egypt reopen the Rafah crossing.

Palestinians: Trade**08 May 2018 | 140143****Asked by: Jo Stevens**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the potential humanitarian effect of ending restrictions on trade between Gaza and the West Bank by building a secure route through Israel.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

It is clear that if restrictions on trade, movement and access between the West Bank and Gaza were eased via creation of a secure route between the two through Israel, humanitarian goods and personnel would be able to reach the intended beneficiaries in a more timely and cost-effective manner. Easing trade restrictions would help to ensure that humanitarian relief reaches those in need, helping to save lives and reduce suffering. More broadly, the benefits of increased trade flow would enhance Gaza's economy, and relieve the humanitarian situation by lifting the overall standard of living. An analysis by the World Bank shows that lifting restrictions on Gaza could lead to additional cumulative growth of approximately 32% by 2025. We continue to press Israel to ease restrictions on trade, movement and access in line with their legitimate security concerns, and urge Hamas to renounce violence and move towards the quartet principles; the UK is committed to the unimpeded movement of humanitarian goods and personnel.

[Palestinians: International Assistance](#)

08 May 2018 | 139375

Asked by: Richard Burden

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department plans to fund the 2018 Occupied Palestinian Territory Humanitarian Fund administered by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Our current humanitarian support includes £1.9 million via the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), which is supporting up to 1 million Gazans by providing clean water and rehabilitating sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. We continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in Gaza closely, including through contact with relevant UN agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian donors, and we continue to ensure that our programmes can be responsive to spikes in need.

[Gaza: Visits Abroad](#)

03 May 2018 | 139357

Asked by: Dr David Drew

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 27 April 2018 to Question 137403, on Gaza: Visits abroad, what plans he has to further investigate the medical needs of people affected by the situation in Gaza by sending representatives into (a) hospitals and (b) medical centres.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and supports the health sector through funding to the UN Relief and Works Agency. We are also supporting the United Nations Children's Fund to provide clean water and rehabilitate sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. Officials from our consulate-General in Jerusalem regularly visit Gaza, including medical facilities, and intend to do so again soon.

[Gaza: Health Services](#)

27 Apr 2018 | 137405

Asked by: Dr David Drew

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to representatives of the Egyptian government on the granting of permits to residents in Gaza who need medical treatment that can only be provided outside of Gaza.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We regularly raise the humanitarian situation in Gaza with the Egyptian authorities. This includes the impact of the closure of the Egypt-Gaza border on the population of Gaza. Our Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Cairo raised this with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 12 April. We encourage Egypt to be as flexible as possible with regard to access to the Rafah border crossing, including for Palestinians in need of medical treatment.

[Gaza: Borders](#)**03 Apr 2018 | 133854****Asked by: Lloyd Russell-Moyle**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment the Government has made of the compatibility with international law of (a) Israeli naval operations off the coast of Gaza and (b) that country's naval blockade there.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We consider that the level of control that Israel retains over Gaza amounts to occupation under international law and hence that Israel's conduct is governed by the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to which Israel is a state party. In line with these provisions the UK continues to call on the Government of Israel to ease movement and access restrictions into and out of Gaza. British officials encouraged an easing of restrictions and improvement in the humanitarian situation in Gaza at the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee on 20 March.

[Gaza: Armed Conflict](#)**27 Mar 2018 | 133916****Asked by: Rosie Cooper**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the security situation in Gaza.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

While the Foreign Secretary has not recently discussed this specific issue with his Israeli counterpart, our Embassy in Tel Aviv and our Consulate-General in Jerusalem frequently urge both the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to take steps to improve conditions in Gaza. Every Israeli and Palestinian has the right to live in peace and security. We strongly condemn the recent attempted assassination of Prime Minister Hamdallah on 13 March, for which there is no justification. The UK continues to support the return of the legitimate Palestinian Authority to Gaza. We urge non-violence, dialogue and progress towards a sustainable Hamas-Fatah reconciliation and an improvement in the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

[Gaza: International Assistance](#)

19 Mar 2018 | 132615

Asked by: Richard Burden

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government was represented at the US-led meeting at the White House on 13 March 2018 on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development and our Embassy in Washington attended this meeting. The UK remains gravely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza. We welcome all practical steps to improve conditions as a matter of urgency.

[Gaza: Overseas Aid](#)

05 Mar 2018 | 129534

Asked by: Roger Godsiff

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assistance the Government is providing to Gaza in response to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' July 2017 call for the funding of essential services including health, water and sanitation.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

The UK is providing £1.9 million to support the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Gaza urgent funding appeal. This is being delivered through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support critical water, sanitation and hygiene needs identified by the appeal. UK funding is helping to provide clean water and rehabilitate sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease, benefitting approximately 1 million Gazans. We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza and are monitoring the situation closely including tracking the UN's emergency indicators.

[Gaza: Hospitals](#)

26 Feb 2018 | 128512

Asked by: Richard Burden

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment her Department has made of the provision of fuel for hospitals in Gaza; and if she will make a statement.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza. In January 2018 the World Health Organization (WHO) assessed that

power shortages are placing an increasing burden on the health sector, and has recently reported that some hospitals and clinics have been partially closed in order to rationalise fuel. The UK will continue to monitor the effect electricity shortages are having on the health sector and is tracking the UN's emergency indicators. We urge all parties to take the necessary practical steps to improve conditions, including restoring the availability of electricity as a matter of urgency. The UK is supporting approximately 1 million Gazans by addressing critical water, sanitation and hygiene needs through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and is a long-term supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), which provides basic services to 1.3 million people in Gaza, including basic health care.

[Gaza: Fuels](#)

20 Feb 2018 | 127744

Asked by: Catherine West

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on fuel supplies for back-up generators in Gaza; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We are aware of reports that Israel has resumed supplying additional electricity to Gaza following an official request by the Palestinian Authority. This has increased supply from an average of four hours a day to six hours per day. We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza and continue to monitor it closely. The UK will continue to urge all the parties to take the necessary practical steps to improve conditions in Gaza, including restoring the availability of electricity as a matter of urgency.

[Gaza: Hospitals](#)

16 Feb 2018 | HL5453

Asked by: Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they intend to take, if any, in response to reports that Beit Hanoun Hospital has closed due to severe shortages of fuel for hospital generators.

Answering member: Lord Bates | Department: Department for International Development

The UK is concerned about reports that Beit Hanoun Hospital has been partially closed in order to rationalise fuel. The UK continues to monitor the humanitarian situation in Gaza closely. The UK is supporting approximately 1 million Gazans by addressing critical water, sanitation and hygiene needs through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and is a long-term supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), which provides basic services to 1.3 million people in Gaza, including basic health care. The UK will continue to urge all the parties to prioritise progress towards reaching a

durable solution for Gaza and to take the necessary practical steps to improve conditions, including restoring the availability of electricity as a matter of urgency.

[Gaza: Health Services](#)

16 Feb 2018 | HL5382

Asked by: Lord Steel of Aikwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, following the announcement by the Palestinian Ministry of Health that because of fuel shortages affecting hospitals and clinics "urgent action is needed to prevent collapse of Gaza's health system", they are planning to offer any assistance.

Answering member: Lord Bates | Department: Department for International Development

We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza and continue to monitor it closely, including the effect electricity shortages are having on the health sector. The UK will continue to urge all the parties to prioritise progress towards reaching a durable solution for Gaza and to take the necessary practical steps to improve conditions, including restoring the availability of electricity as a matter of urgency. The UK is supporting approximately 1 million Gazans by addressing critical water, sanitation and hygiene needs through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and is a long-term supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), which provides basic services to 1.3 million people in Gaza, including basic health care.

[Gaza: Travel Restrictions](#)

04 Jan 2018 | HL4298

Asked by: Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 11 December (HL3639), what representations they are making to the Palestinian Authority concerning prospects for opening the Rafah crossing and allowing people with visas to leave.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon
| Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem frequently urge the Palestinian Authority (PA) to take steps to improve conditions in Gaza. They also regularly discuss border crossings with the PA in the context of PA empowerment in Gaza. Officials from our Embassy in Cairo also raised the Rafah crossing with the Egyptian authorities on 19 December, highlighting the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Palestinians: Politics and Government**20 Nov 2017 | 113200****Asked by: Sir Nicholas Soames**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the humanitarian situation in Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan assessed that 1.1 million of Gaza's population and 0.5 million in the West Bank are acutely vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance in 2017; and report that a lack of funding for water, sanitation and hygiene interventions have left 1.45 million Gazans at risk of waterborne diseases.

I visited Gaza and the West Bank in August and saw the extent of the humanitarian situation first hand. The UK is supporting approximately 1 million Gazans by addressing critical water, sanitation and hygiene needs through the United Nations Children's Fund. The UK is also a long-term supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, which provides basic services to people across Gaza and the West Bank, including basic health care.

Gaza: Health Services**17 Oct 2017 | 106727****Asked by: Julie Cooper**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to provide funding and support to healthcare centres in Gaza which are operating without electricity or fuel for backup generators.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department: Department for International Development

We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza and continue to monitor it closely, including the effect electricity shortages are having on the health sector. We urge all the parties to find a sustainable solution. The UK is a long-term supporter of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) which provides basic services to 1.3 million people in Gaza including basic health care.

Gaza**18 Jul 2017 | HL659****Asked by: Baroness Tonge**

Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of living conditions in the Gaza strip; and whether they are planning to send a team to investigate and report back.

Answering member: Lord Bates | Department: Department for International Development

The UK Government is concerned at the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Urgent improvements in infrastructure, employment, energy and water are essential to improve living conditions. The UK is closely monitoring the situation, including participating in a joint mission with the UN to Gaza on the 10th July. We urge the parties to find a sustainable solution to the current energy crisis that alleviates the suffering of the Gazan people. In Gaza, UK support includes funding for basic service delivery through the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, support for humanitarian access and Gaza's reconstruction, and economic development programming to help create jobs.

[Gaza: Electricity](#)

11 Jul 2017 | HL411

Asked by: The Lord Bishop of Southwark

Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to respond to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, following the decision by the government of Israel to implement a request from the Palestinian Authority to reduce the flow of electricity supplies from Israel to Gaza.

Answering member: Lord Bates | Department: Department for International Development

The UK is working closely with the UN to monitor the humanitarian situation in Gaza. We are also funding basic service delivery in Gaza through the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees. We urge all the parties to find a sustainable solution to the current energy situation.

[Gaza: International Assistance](#)

11 Jul 2017 | HL245

Asked by: Baroness Tonge

Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the preparations in place if Gaza were to become uninhabitable by 2020 as described in the report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development published in 2015.

Answering member: Lord Bates | Department: Department for International Development

The UK Government is concerned by the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and it is vital that a further deterioration in living standards is avoided. We are working alongside international partners to make urgent improvements in infrastructure, economic opportunities, energy and water, to support vulnerable Gazans today and avoid a serious crisis in the future. However as the United Nations report makes clear, aid alone cannot solve the problems in Gaza. We continue to press all parties on the need for a sustainable political solution for Gaza which will address Israel's legitimate security concerns whilst opening up movement and access. Resolving the current energy situation is a particular priority.

5. Other Parliamentary material

5.1 Debates

[Palestinian Territories](#)

07 Jun 2018 | House of Lords | 791 cc1410-1453

Lords motion to take note of the situation in the Palestinian Territories.
Agreed to on question.

[Gaza: Humanitarian Situation](#)

24 May 2018 | House of Commons | 641 cc439-480WH

Motion that this House has considered the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.
Agreed to on question.

5.2 Statements

[United Nations Human Rights Council: Resolution on Gaza](#)

21 May 2018 | 791 cc953-6

[Extract: only the Minister's opening statement is included below]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon (The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): My Lords, with the leave of the House I shall now repeat in the form of a Statement the Answer to an Urgent Question asked in another place on the decision of the United Kingdom Government to abstain from voting on the resolution of the Human Rights Council held on 18 May calling for an independent investigation into the recent violence in Gaza. The Statement is as follows:

"We abstained on calls for a commission of inquiry into recent violence in Gaza during the UN Human Rights Council session on Friday. Unfortunately, the substance of the resolution was impartial and unbalanced. We could not support an investigation that refused to explicitly examine the action of non-state actors such as Hamas. An investigation of this kind would not provide us with a comprehensive assessment of accountability. It would risk hardening positions on both sides and move us further away from finding a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

However, the United Kingdom continues to fully support the need for an independent and transparent investigation into recent events. We call directly on Israel to carry out a transparent inquiry into the IDF's conduct at the border fence and to demonstrate how this will achieve a sufficient level of independence. We believe that this investigation should include international members. We urge that the findings of such an investigation be made public, and if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible are held to account. The Foreign Secretary stressed

the importance of Israel conducting an independent investigation when he spoke to Prime Minister Netanyahu on 16 May”.

My Lords, that concludes the Statement.

Gaza

15 May 2018 | 791 cc597-601

[Extract: only the Minister’s opening statement is included below]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon (The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): My Lords, with the leave of the House, I shall repeat in the form of a Statement the Answer to an Urgent Question asked in the other place on the violence at the Gaza border and its impact on the Middle East peace process. The Statement is as follows:

“As I said in the statement I put out from the FCO yesterday, the violence in Gaza and the West Bank has been shocking. The loss of life and the large number of injured Palestinians, including children, are tragic, and it is extremely worrying that the number of those killed continues to rise. Such violence is destructive to peace efforts.

We have been clear that the United Kingdom supports the Palestinians’ right to peaceful protest. It is deplorable, but real, that extremist elements have been exploiting these protests for their own violent purposes. We will not waver in our support for Israel’s right to defend its borders, but the large volume of live fire is extremely concerning. We continue to implore Israel to show greater restraint.

The UK remains committed to a two-state solution, with Jerusalem as a shared capital. All sides now need to show real leadership and courage, promote calm, refrain from inflaming tensions further, and show with renewed urgency that the path to a two-state solution is through negotiation and peace.

We agree with the UN Secretary-General’s envoy that the situation in Gaza is desperate and deteriorating, and that the international community must step up efforts. We call on the UN special representative of the Secretary-General to bring forward proposals to address the situation in Gaza. These should include easing the restrictions on access and movement, and international support for urgent infrastructure and economic development projects. We also reiterate our support for the Egyptian-led reconciliation process and the return of the PA to full administration of the Gaza Strip.

We must look forward and work urgently towards a resolution of the long-standing issues between Israel and the Palestinian people. Now more than ever, we need a political process that delivers a two-state solution. Every death and every wounding casts a shadow for the future. The human tragedies should be used not as more building blocks for immovable positions, which will lead inevitably to more confrontation, but as a spur for urgent change. Yesterday’s tragedies demonstrate why peace is urgently needed”.

5.3 Early Day Motions

[Condemnation of the massacre of Palestinian protestors along the Gaza fence](#)

EDM 1318 (session 2017-19)

Grahame M. Morris

24 May 2018

That this House calls on the Government to unequivocally condemn the massacre of Palestinian protestors along the Gaza border fence which has led to the deaths of at least 62 unarmed civilians and the injuring of thousands more, including 1,359 with gunshot injuries admitted to hospitals in a single day on Monday 14 May 2018; demands that the Government reaffirm the rights of protected persons under belligerent occupation and insist on an independent investigation into the unlawful use of live ammunition against protestors as well as outlining actions and sanctions should such an investigation not take place; asks the Foreign Office to summon the Israeli Ambassador for an explanation into the massacre and reiterate that lethal force is an option of last resort in circumstances where there is an imminent threat to life; believes that the path to peace and a two state solution is being undermined by the Israeli Government which has deliberately engineered a humanitarian crisis in Gaza through the decade-long blockade, has taken provocative action with the relocation of the US Embassy in Jerusalem, has proactively undermined a viable Palestinian State through settlement building as well as violating the 4th Geneva Convention through the use of lethal force against civilians protesting for their right to return to their homes, including a Canadian doctor who was clearly identified and journalists covering the scene; and asks the Government to follow up that strong condemnation with tangible actions to prohibit further attacks on civilian protestors.

[United Nations Human Rights Council Commission of Inquiry into Violations of International Law](#)

EDM 1294 (session 2017-19)

Richard Burden

21 May 2018

That this House welcomes the resolution of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) on 18 May 2018 to establish an independent, international Commission of Inquiry to investigate all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in the context of large-scale civilian protests in the occupied Palestinian territory; regrets the failure of the Government to join 29 partner countries on the HRC in condemning the disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by the Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians; believes the reasons given by the Government for its abstention from the vote do not bear scrutiny as the HRC resolution calls on all parties to ensure that future demonstrations remain peaceful and to abstain from actions that could endanger the lives of civilians; calls, as the remit of the Inquiry is to investigate all human rights violations and as the resolution, both on Israel and the occupying power and on all relevant parties to co-operate with the commission of inquiry and facilitate its access; and further calls on the Government to make good on the statements by the Minister for the Middle East to hon.

Members during the Urgent Question on events in Gaza answered in the House on 15 May 2018 by giving its active support to the HRC Commission of Inquiry and upholding in practice the principle of accountability for violations of international law.

Death of Palestinian protesters on 14 May 2018

EDM 1264 (session 2017-19)

Jonathan Edwards

15 May 2018

That this House unreservedly and unequivocally condemns the brutal actions of the Israeli Government in Gaza on 14 May 2018; recognises the decision by President Trump to move the US Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as a deliberately inflammatory and dangerous act that has only served to heighten tensions in the region; believes this action has directly led to the killing of 55 Palestinians and injuring of over 2,000; further recognises the fundamental right of Palestinian people to demonstrate without being shot at with live ammunition, and the duty on the Israeli Government to respect the human rights of civilians; further condemns the US for abdicating all responsibility for leading peace efforts and calls on the rest of the international community to quickly determine how to fill the absence and avoid a more prolonged and open conflict; urges the Government to not simply remain silent on the systematic abuses in the occupied Palestinian territories; and calls on the Government to urge the Israeli Government to put an end to the entirely unnecessary death of protestors, and to work with the Palestinian Authority and the international community to find a peaceful way to negotiate a two-state solution to bring an end to this conflict.

Humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip

EDM 208 (session 2017-19)

Caroline Lucas

18 July 2017

That this House is deeply concerned about the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip; notes that the blockade of Gaza by the Israeli and Egyptian authorities has been in place for 10 years, violates international law and continues to impoverish civilians in Gaza; recognises that Gaza remains under Israeli occupation and that Israel's military controls Gaza's land and maritime borders; notes that the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights has said Gaza will be unliveable for its 1.8 million inhabitants by 2018; expresses grave concern at the combination of Israeli, Egyptian, Palestinian Authority and Hamas policies that have made the situation in Gaza acutely worse over the past month; condemns the Israeli decision of 19 June to cut electricity supply to Gaza on the request of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas; further notes that on 12 July the sole power plant in Gaza shut down due to lack of fuel; expresses concern that inadequate supply of power will result in critical services, including hospital intensive care, being shut down; calls on all parties urgently to engage in talks to resolve the electricity crisis; and calls on the Government to apply pressure to the Israeli and Egyptian authorities so as to ensure the basic needs of civilians in Gaza are met.

6. Further reading

Committee inquiries

Humanitarian situation in Gaza examined

International Development Committee

Scope of the recent evidence session

The Committee heard from development stakeholders on the current assessments of the humanitarian situation in Gaza and examined with the Minister for International Development and the Middle East at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on how DFID, and the UK Government, can achieve progress in the short, medium and longer term.

[Oral evidence: Humanitarian situation in Gaza](#), International Development Committee, HC 953, 19 June 2018

Websites

[Gaza Emergency](#)

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

[Gaza Crisis](#)

Oxfam

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