

**Debate Pack**

CDP-0039 (2022)

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# UK Government recognition of the State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel

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# 1 Summary

A Backbench Business Committee debate on UK Government recognition of the State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel is scheduled for Thursday 24 February 2022 in the House of Commons chamber.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 UK Government position: Non recognition

In October 2014, the House of Commons [voted in favour](#) of the following:

That this House believes that the Government should recognise the state of Palestine alongside the state of Israel, as a contribution to securing a negotiated two state solution.

This vote was not binding on the Government.

The UK Government has not recognised this statehood, and abstained in the UN General Assembly vote that granted Palestine non-member observer status at the UN. The previous Library Briefing Paper, “[International status of Palestine](#)”, 3 October 2014 covered these developments in detail. See also the Briefing Paper, “[The Occupied Palestinian Territories: recent developments](#)”, 20 March 2017.

In recent months, the UK has continued to reiterate its long-standing position that it would only recognise a State of Palestine at the “right time” in the peace process with Israel. In February 2021, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said:

The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time of our choosing, and when it best serves the objective of peace.<sup>1</sup>

In September 2020, the Government said:

We are clear that we want to see the creation of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian state - living in peace and security, side by side with Israel. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners

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<sup>1</sup> PQ [151691](#) [Palestinians: Recognition of States], 19 February 2021.

strongly advocating a two-state solution and encouraging a return to meaningful negotiations.<sup>2</sup>

The Government has reiterated this position again in in [June 2021](#), and in a [Petitions Committee debate](#) in that same month, saying:

The UK Government position is clear: the UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the object of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot, and will not, end the occupation. The UK Government continue to believe that without a negotiated peace agreement, the occupation, and the problems that come with it, will continue. We are committed to the objective of a sovereign, prosperous and peaceful Palestinian state, living side by side with a safe and secure Israel.

## 2.2

## Arguments in favour of recognition

Some recent arguments suggest that the UK should recognise a Palestinian State to further the progression of negotiations and peace talks. Liberal Democrat MP Layla Moran recently argued that recognition would help re-establish peace talks, [writing in The Independent](#):

...the time is right for Britain to soon play its strongest hand and recognise the state of Palestine. Without Israel and Palestine coming to the table as equal partners, the likelihood of the negotiations failing is almost inevitable.

Yossi Mekelberg, Professor of international relations and an associate fellow of the MENA Program at Chatham House, has [recently written](#):

... Palestine remains a hybrid political entity that many countries consider a state but won't go so far as doing the honorable thing and recognizing it as a state regardless of the Security Council. This means it does not get treated as an equal member of the community of sovereign states.

...

The power of symbolism cannot and should not be underestimated, but there is also overwhelming evidence that international recognition of Palestine would serve the causes of peace, justice and international law. For too long, the issue of recognition has been framed as a prize waiting for the Palestinians at the end of negotiations. This has always put Palestinian negotiators in an inferior position around the negotiation table vis-a-vis Israel, which is not only a superior military and economic force that is occupying its land, but one that is formally a state. Laying to rest the question, and the whip, of Palestinian self-determination would accelerate the peace negotiations and give them a better chance of succeeding.

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<sup>2</sup> PQ [82211](#) [Palestinians: Recognition of States], 9 September 2020.

## 2.3

# International recognition of a Palestinian State

Palestinian Membership of international organisations includes organisations such as the International Criminal Court, in the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Group of 77, and UNESCO.

At the United Nations, the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations<sup>3</sup> [lists the states](#) that have recognised the State of Palestine.

While this may indicate some form of recognition by the members of those organisations, membership of organisations *per se* is not automatic in achieving statehood. The Commons Library Briefing Paper, “[Palestinian statehood](#)”, 11 August 2011, also explored the issues surrounding its recognition in international organisations such as the UN.

Currently, [139 of 193 UN Member States](#) recognise this statehood.

## Statehood as an aim of peace talks

A two-state solution for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories was the objective of a peaceful settlement highlighted in the 1993 Oslo Accords ([the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements](#)).

Article 1 of this agreement stated the aims of the negotiations between the two sides as including self-government and permanent status:

The aim of the Israeli–Palestinian negotiations within the current Middle East peace process is, among other things, to establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority, the elected Council (the ‘Council’), for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. It is understood that the interim arrangements are an integral part of the whole peace process and that the negotiations on the permanent status will lead to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

More recent attempts to set out a solution to the conflict continued to aim for a two-state solution and the independence of a Palestinian state. In 2003, [a UN-backed roadmap](#) included “a vision of two states, Israel and a sovereign, independent, democratic and viable Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security.” In 2007, a [joint understanding](#) between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation agreed to resume negotiations “[i]n

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<sup>3</sup> This mission currently has Non-member Observer State status at the UN since 2012. See, UN General Assembly Press Release, [General Assembly votes overwhelmingly to accord Palestine 'non-member observer state' status in United Nations](#), 29 November 2012. See also, Commons Library Briefing Paper, ‘[Palestinian statehood](#)’, 11 August 2011.

furtherance of the goal of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.”

The two-state solution remains the most favoured approach to achieving peace, despite some incidents being criticised for potentially endangering this in recent years. For example, On 28 January 2020, the former US President Trump’s Administration [published its peace plan](#) for the Middle East which included controversial proposals to swap land between Israel and the Palestinians. This would have required Israel to annex land currently occupied by settlements in the West Bank, and was [met with hostility](#) by some.

In February 2022 a group of Israeli and Palestinian public figures drew up [a new peace initiative](#)—largely based on the 2003 Geneva Accord. The nearly 100-page confederation plan includes recommendations for how to address core issues. Importantly the plan starts with recognition of a Palestinian state alongside Israel before seeking to work out the details of controversial issues such as conflicting claims to Jerusalem, final borders and the fate of Palestinian refugees.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reports that Israel’s Foreign Ministry and the Palestinian Authority [declined to comment](#) in response to the confederation proposal.

## 3

# Press and media 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.

### ['Holy Land Confederation': Oslo Accords architect presents new peace plan](#)

Haaretz  
Allison Kaplan Sommer  
9 February 2022

### [UN chief 'encouraged' by engagement between Israeli and Palestinian officials](#)

UN News  
United Nations Department of Global Communications  
8 February 2022

### [Israeli, Palestinian figures propose 2-state confederation](#)

Voice of America  
Associated Press  
7 February 2022

### [The Guardian view on Amnesty's Israel report: dominating the discourse](#)

Guardian  
6 February 2022

### [Israeli general turned lawmaker emerges as settler critic](#)

Independent  
21 January 2022

### [UK warned it would recognize Palestine if Israel annexed West Bank, book reveals](#)

Times of Israel  
1 January 2022

### ['Not a life': Israel keeps many Palestinians without legal status](#)

Al Jazeera  
Hisham Daraghmeh  
26 October 2021

[UN experts condemn Israel's designation of Palestinian human rights defenders as terrorist organisations](#)

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
25 October 2021

[No Palestinian state under Bennett-led government, FM says](#)

Jerusalem Post  
Gil Hoffman and Tovah Lazaroff  
20 August 2021

[Israel's Lapid to EU's to diplomats: Two-state solution is unfeasible](#)

Haaretz  
Jonathan Lis  
12 July 2021

[Ban Ki-moon: US should back a new approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict](#)

Financial Times  
Ban Ki-moon  
29 June 2021

[Assessing one-state and two-state proposals to solve the Israel-Palestine conflict](#)

E-International Relations  
Jeremy Pressman  
27 June 2021

['No difference': Palestinians react to Israeli coalition deal](#)

Al Jazeera  
3 June 2021

[Palestinian unity upends Middle East status quo](#)

Financial Times  
David Gardner  
26 May 2021

[In defense of the two-state solution](#)

Vox  
Zack Beauchamp  
26 May 2021

[UK government accused of hypocrisy on Palestine](#)

AA [Anadolu Agency] News  
21 May 2021

[Palestinians face a new reality](#)

Financial Times  
22 September 2020

['The dawn of a new Middle East': Trump celebrates Abraham Accords with White House signing ceremony](#)

Politico  
Quint Forgey  
15 September 2020

[To recognize or not to recognize: EU recognition of Palestine](#)

Middle East Institute  
Lior Lehrs  
5 August 2020

[European countries need to recognise the Palestinian state before it's too late](#)

Guardian  
Sam Bahour  
12 July 2020

[UK 'must be pressed to recognise Palestinian state': ex-diplomat](#)

Al Jazeera  
Alasdair Soussi  
2 April 2020

[More Israelis, Palestinians support the 'one-state' solution](#)

Al-Monitor  
Ksenia Svetlova  
13 February 2020

[The two-state solution can be achieved through a confederation](#)

Jerusalem Post  
Yossi Beilin  
9 September 2019

[Britain needs to recognise Palestine as an independent state](#)

Guardian  
Ian Black  
7 May 2019

[Recognise Palestine now, Scots politicians urge UK](#)

The Times  
Mark McLaughlin  
30 March 2019

## 4

## Press releases

### Unilateral actions risk undermining engagement between Israeli Government and Palestinian leadership

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

19 January 2022

Statement by Ambassador James Kariuki at the Security Council briefing on the Middle East Peace Process:

Thank you, Madam President.

[...]

The UK welcomes continued engagement between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, including direct meetings between Defence Minister Gantz and President Abbas, and discussions between the Ministries of Finance aimed at improving the economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Such direct engagement is vital given the scale of the current challenges. We urge Israel and the PA to accelerate efforts to improve the financial situation and the economic and humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and Gaza. We welcome the appointment of new Palestinian Ministers of the Interior and Awqaf and continue to urge the Palestinian Authority to deliver reforms towards greater accountability, transparency and efficacy.

Madam President, on 17 January British diplomats witnessed the attempted eviction of the Salhia family who live and run a business in Sheikh Jarrah. Earlier this morning authorities returned to demolish their home and arrested members of the family. We again urge the Government of Israel to cease such policies. Evictions are against international humanitarian law in all but the most exceptional circumstances and cause unnecessary suffering.

Also on 17 January, as we have heard, approval was given to the ‘lower aqueduct’ settlement plan representing nearly 1,500 housing units, some of which fall outside the Green Line, and to be built between Givat Hamatos and Har Homa. Madam President, we urge the Government of Israel to permanently end its settlement expansion and settlement activity, which heightens tension and threatens the viability of a future Palestinian state.

The UK condemns the attempted stabbing attack on an IDF soldier in the West Bank on 17 January. This incident follows several attacks on Israeli civilians and soldiers at the end of last year. We call for the parties to work together to condemn violence and minimise tension.

Stability in Gaza remains a focus for the UK. We condemn the firing of missiles from Gaza towards Israel at the start of January and we urge all sides to work to sustain the calm.

Madam President, we urge both parties to avoid unilateral actions harmful to peace, which risk undermining the engagement between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian leadership I referred to at the beginning of my statement. We call on both parties to work together to create the foundations for future progress towards a two-state solution.

### **The United Kingdom's position on the status of Jerusalem is clear and long-standing**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

**1 December 2021**

Explanation of vote delivered by Fergus Eckersley, UK Political Coordinator at the UN, at the General Assembly vote on resolution A/76/L.16

The United Kingdom's position on the status of Jerusalem is clear and long-standing: it should be determined in a negotiated settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The final determination of Jerusalem must ensure that the holy city is a shared capital of Israel and a Palestinian state, granting access and religious rights for all who hold it dear. The United Kingdom opposes unilateral action in Jerusalem absent a final status settlement and remains supportive of the historic status quo.

The UK recognises that Jerusalem and the holy sites at Haram al Sharif/Temple Mount hold particular significance for many groups around the globe, especially the three Abrahamic faiths of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The UK welcomes language in the resolution reaffirming the special significance of the holy sites and the City of Jerusalem for these three religions and calling for respect for the historic Status Quo.

However, the resolution adopted today refers to the holy sites in Jerusalem in purely Islamic terms, without recognising the Jewish terminology of "Temple Mount". The UK has made clear for many years that we disagree with this approach, and while we welcome the removal of the majority of these references, we are disappointed that we were unable to find a solution to the final instance. On principle, the United Kingdom has therefore moved our vote today from a "yes" to an "abstention". If the unbalanced reference had been removed, the UK would have been ready and willing to vote "yes".

The United Kingdom is clear that this should not be understood to be a reflection of a change in UK policy towards Jerusalem, but instead as an important signal of our commitment to recognising the history of Jerusalem for the three monotheistic religions.

**Lack of progress continues to impact negatively the lives of Israelis and Palestinians**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
19 October 2021**

Statement by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at the Security Council briefing on the Middle East Peace Process:

Thank you, Mr President and may I welcome you back to New York. Thank you also to the Special Coordinator for your briefing and to our two civil society briefers Mr Daniel Levy and Dr Hanan Ashrawi for their thought-provoking contributions today.

Mr President, I'd like to start by welcoming the increased engagement between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority over recent months. We are confident this dialogue will continue, and it is our hope that it will deliver tangible results to tackle immediate and long-term threats to peace and stability. The parties have our full support in this.

The United Kingdom also welcomes the increased calm in Gaza, and recent steps taken by Israel to reduce constraints on access for goods and people into and out of the strip. We now ask Israel to set out a full and transparent plan to improve movement and access in Gaza, in line with International Humanitarian Law, to allow for reconstruction and development to advance.

A number of positive signals notwithstanding, we continue to see negative trends in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. As we have heard, rates of demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes have continued to rise, and this year may see the worst rate of demolitions in five years. We urge the Government of Israel to ensure that Palestinian families living in the Occupied Territories can remain safely in their homes.

Violence in the West Bank, including settler attacks against Palestinian people and property, is also on the rise. The shocking attack on the Palestinian village of Umm Mufaqarah, in the South Hebron Hills, on 28 September resulted in a three-year-old Palestinian child being hospitalised. We call on Israel to provide appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, to ensure all such incidents are investigated thoroughly, and for those responsible to be brought to justice. We welcome the Government of Israel's commitment to addressing settler violence and Foreign Minister Lapid's condemnation of the Umm Mufaqarah attack.

We are also concerned about the Israeli Security Forces' use of excessive force. We continue to urge Israel to uphold the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interests.

The Palestinian Authority's (PA) dire fiscal situation carries the risk that it is unable to pay salaries or its suppliers in full from next month onwards. Rapid action is needed to improve the situation. The UK will continue to work with the PA to help it implement necessary reforms, and we urge our international partners to do the same.

Lastly Mr President, as we celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child last week, we were reminded of the impressive educational attainment rates for girls across the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We must celebrate this success and ensure that the vital provision of education, including to girls, is protected from the threat of instability.

In conclusion, the lack of progress in the Middle East Peace Process continues to impact negatively the lives of everyday Israelis and Palestinians, and the ongoing conflict is in need of a just and lasting resolution. We continue to urge all parties to renew their commitment to peacebuilding, and to work to deliver it. The UK continues to believe that a two-state solution offers the only meaningful prospect for durable peace.

### [Israeli settlements: statement by France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK](#)

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

**6 May 2021**

The Governments of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom have issued a joint statement on Israeli settlements:

We urge the Government of Israel to reverse its decision to advance the construction of 540 settlement units in the Har Homa E area of the occupied West Bank, and to cease its policy of settlement expansion across the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Settlements are illegal under international law and threaten prospects for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

If implemented, the decision to advance settlements in Har Homa, between East Jerusalem and Bethlehem, will cause further damage to the prospects for a viable Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as the capital of both Israel and a Palestinian State. This move, alongside settlement advancement in Givat HaMatos and continued evictions in East Jerusalem, including in Sheikh Jarrah, also undermines efforts to rebuild trust between the parties following the positive resumption of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation.

We call on both sides to refrain from any unilateral action and resume a credible and meaningful dialogue, to advance efforts for the two state solution and an end to the conflict.

**Working towards a two-state solution**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

**26 February 2021**

Remarks by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at the Security Council briefing on the Middle East (Israel/Palestine), 26 February 2021:

Let me start by thanking the Special Coordinator for his briefing, and thanking Malak and Oren for sharing their personal reflections with us today - including on how to help foster peace and understanding among new and older generations alike.

In order to build trust between the parties and populations, unilateral acts must also cease. The UK has called on the Government of Israel to end the demolition of Palestinian homes and structures in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The latest demolitions in Humsa Al-Baqai'a have again made this vulnerable Palestinian community, including children, homeless. We urge the Government of Israel to allow the unimpeded delivery of vital humanitarian aid. We also call on the Government of Israel to refrain from the destruction or confiscation of such aid once it's delivered.

The UK will continue to champion the rights and freedoms of women, young people and marginalised groups. We join Palestinian women, and all Palestinians, in rejecting the recent changes made by Hamas - the de facto authorities in Gaza - to travel arrangements from Gaza, which will limit Gazan women's independence and liberty. We call for this decision to be fully reversed, and for all parties to ensure greater freedoms and protections for women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

We are clear that the parties must work together to deliver meaningful improvements for Palestinians and Israelis. In this context, I'd also like to welcome, as others have done, the constructive discussions held this week at the Ad-hoc Liaison Committee. We must now drive progress on measures that can alleviate the health and economic challenges in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We welcome cooperation on vaccine access, and encourage the Government of Israel to facilitate the transfer of vaccines to the Palestinian Authority when required. We also need to see tangible and time-bound commitments from the parties to address long-standing barriers to development of the Palestinian economy. Progress against these issues will help foster an environment conducive to future peace negotiations.

Finally, I'd like to welcome the continued progress towards legislative and Presidential elections in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. As we have heard today, Palestinians need free and fair elections, as a pathway to accountable institutions, based on respect for the rule of law and human rights.

The UK remains committed to a two-state solution. We will continue to work with the parties to the conflict, to build the conditions for a permanent agreement. As our briefers today have made clear, we must work towards a better future for Israelis and Palestinians alike. A just and lasting resolution that ends the occupation and delivers peace is the best way to achieve such a future.

**Urging a negotiated two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians**  
**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**  
**24 June 2020**

Statement by the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP at the Security Council briefing on the Middle East Peace Process:

Thank you, Mr President, and thank you to Special Coordinator Mladenov and to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for their respective briefings.

Mr President, I address the Council today at a critical juncture.

Like many, I am troubled and frustrated by the lack of progress towards a two-state solution.

In 1947, at the end of the British Mandate over Palestine, the General Assembly confirmed the international community's view of the need for partition into two states.

In 1993, the Palestine Liberation Organisation recognised Israel and accepted the 1967 lines as the basis for the future boundary between Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

It was a moment of great optimism.

It marked Palestinian agreement to the solution Israel itself had accepted in 1947, and confirmed the only solution that the world could see.

Despite moments of optimism, both parties have struggled to find the common ground needed for a lasting, peaceful settlement.

It has always been true that any peace settlement needs the support of both peoples.

Because a settlement, and peace, must be agreed and not imposed. But it also needs pragmatism and flexibility from both sides.

The Secretary-General, in his report on implementation of Resolution 2334, and the Special Coordinator in his briefing to the Council today, have outlined the many elements that have stalled the peace process.

We have heard about settlement expansion, increases in demolitions, seizures, and worsening settler violence.

The UK has long urged Israel to end these counterproductive activities.

Meanwhile, Palestinian militants have fired rockets and launched incendiary devices from Gaza, threatening Israel's security.

Israelis have suffered from the scourge of terrorism and anti-Semitic incitement.

Let me be clear: the UK is committed to Israeli security. We condemn all forms of incitement and anti-Semitism wholeheartedly.

Most critically, Israel's plans to annex parts of the West Bank pose a significant and possibly existential threat to the peace process.

The UK has been clear, in this Council and beyond, that unilateral action is unacceptable.

Annexation risks signalling Israeli rejection of the very solution Israel and the international community agreed in 1947.

As my Prime Minister said on 16 June, the UK strongly opposes annexation, which would breach international law. The United Kingdom will not recognise any unilateral attempt to change the border. Such a step would go against the rules-based international order and the UN Charter. Annexation could not go unanswered, and we implore Israel to reconsider.

Such a step has the potential to trigger regional instability, threatening Israel's own security. It could have a real impact on Israel's relations with the region, as well as the international community.

And let us not forget the consequences for those most directly affected: the Palestinian people.

We cannot predict the implications as a loss of hope. But we can say with some degree of certainty that it is the extremists who would benefit most.

Mr President, we have to find another way.

A lasting agreement will only be achieved by real movement towards renewed peace by negotiation; negotiations that create a viable and sovereign

Palestinian state, living in peace and security side-by-side with Israel, based on the 1967 borders with agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states, and a just, fair, agreed and realistic settlement for refugees.

I address this Council today to express the United Kingdom's willingness to stand with the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships in choosing the path of dialogue.

We do not underestimate the challenges, but firmly believe that with bold leadership, peace is possible. The UK stands ready to support all efforts to achieve a lasting and peaceful solution.

We recognise that the United States retains a key role in the Middle East Peace Process. So we urge the United States, Israel and the Palestinian leadership to find a means of restarting discussions, supported by the international community.

As I have said, flexibility, pragmatism and indeed compromise will be needed on all sides.

We understand this path is not easy, but we must do all we can to pursue a negotiated outcome.

Mr President, a peace imposed is no peace at all. It will achieve no more than to sow the seeds of future mistrust and instability. Both Israelis and Palestinians deserve better.

Despite the setbacks, the UK continues to believe profoundly that a negotiated, genuine two-state solution is the only viable means of bringing peace and stability to Israelis and Palestinians.

It is the only way to preserve Israel's Jewish, democratic identity and realise Palestinians' rights, including self-determination. And it is the only way to permanently bring an end to this conflict.

Thank you.

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## PQs

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Questions: Middle East

25 Jan 2022 | 707 cc830-1

**Asked by: Matthew Offord**

The successful conclusion of peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians is key to bringing peace to the region, yet Hamas publicly condemn peace negotiations and has committed itself to Israel's destruction. Does my right hon. Friend agree that until Hamas disarms, Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with a terror group which calls for its very destruction?

**Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Hamas has not proven itself to be good for the Palestinian people. The simple truth is that its aggressive posture and threats to eradicate the state of Israel have harmed relations between Israelis and Palestinians. We wish to see a viable two-state solution with Israelis and Palestinians living side by side in peace, prosperity and freedom. Hamas has long been a roadblock to that. We call upon it to set aside its violent ways and pursue a path to peace.

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Topical Questions

25 Jan 2022 | 707 cc844-8

**Asked by: Marsha De Cordova**

Last week saw the first eviction of a Palestinian family in Sheikh Jarrah in east Jerusalem in five years. Demolitions of Palestinian homes in the Occupied Territories have increased by 21% in 2021, and currently 200 more Palestinian families have eviction orders and are at risk of being displaced. The forced evictions of Palestinians must stop, so will the Minister condemn these demolitions, and what action will he take to stop further evictions of Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah?

**Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

I forgive the hon. Lady for not being a devoted follower of my social media feeds and statements; I have already put out a statement on those demolitions. As I said in response to an earlier question, the UK enjoys an incredibly strong relationship with Israel. That allows us to bring up difficult and sensitive issues such as this, but also enables us to work with Israel on areas of mutual interest and concern, including ultimately a viable two-state solution.

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Topical Questions

26 Oct 2021 | 702 cc134-8

**Asked by: Matt Western**

I welcome the Secretary of State to her position. Will she update the House on her Government's recent discussions with international allies on restarting a meaningful peace process between Palestine and the Israeli Government? Will she describe the personal importance that she attaches to achieving a two-state solution?

**Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary engages regularly with the leadership of both Israel and the Palestinian Authority. It remains a foundation stone of UK foreign policy in the region to pursue, support and, where possible, facilitate a two-state solution based on 1967 lines with agreed land swaps and Jerusalem as a shared capital of both states.

### Palestinians: Recognition of States

7 Jul 2021 | HL1361

**Asked by: Lord Stone of Blackheath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 21 June (HL820) and their position that they will "recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace", what assessment they have made of the case for recognising Palestine as a state now in order to facilitate negotiations between the government of an internationally-recognised state of Palestine and the government of Israel on an agreed border; and whether they will now recognise the state of Palestine.

**Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Any decision to recognise a Palestinian state will rest on an assessment of the prospects for peace, and what best supports progress towards a two-state solution. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. The UK priority is working with the parties and other international actors to encourage a durable ceasefire and to urge them to address the drivers of conflict.

### [Israel: Politics and Government](#)

21 Jun 2021 | HL771

**Asked by: Lord Jones of Cheltenham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 3 June (HL275), what assessment they have made of the formation of a new unity government in Israel; and what assessment they have made of the implications of such a development for the possibility of UK recognition of Palestine as a sovereign nation.

**Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We look forward to maintaining excellent relations with the new Israeli government, when formed, and working closely together. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners to strongly advocate for a two-state solution and encourage a return to meaningful negotiations between both parties.

### [Palestinians: Recognition of States](#)

21 Jun 2021 | HL763

**Asked by: Baroness Janke**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 2 June (HL351), what are the necessary criteria to meet their condition that they will recognise Palestine as a state when it "best serves the objective of peace" to do so.

**Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Any decision to recognise a Palestinian state will rest on an assessment of the prospects for peace, and what best supports progress towards a two-state solution.

### [Israel: Palestinians](#)

10 Jun 2021 | HL636

**Asked by: Baroness Sheehan**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the sustainability of their position in support of a two state solution to the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict, and (2) the impact on that sustainability of recognising Palestine as a state.

**Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The Foreign Secretary visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 25 and 26 May. During his visit the Foreign Secretary met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and reiterated the UK's firm commitment to the two-state solution as the best way to permanently end the occupation, deliver Palestinian self-determination and preserve Israel's security and democratic identity.

The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners to advocate for a two-state solution and encourage a return to meaningful negotiations between both parties.

**Palestinians: Recognition of States**

**19 Feb 2021 | 151691**

**Asked by: Matthew Offord**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Palestinian Authority joining the Rome Statute in 2015, whether the Government recognises Palestine as a sovereign state.

**Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time of our choosing, and when it best serves the objective of peace.

**Palestinians: Recognition of States**

**9 Sep 2020 | 82211**

**Asked by: Rupa Huq**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has held with his counterparts in other European states on reaching a co-ordinated recognition of the State of Palestine after the end of the transition period.

**Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We are clear that we want to see the creation of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian state - living in peace and security, side by side with Israel. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners strongly advocating a two-state solution and encouraging a return to meaningful negotiations.

## 6

## Debates

### [Palestine: Road Map to Peace](#)

17 Nov 2021 | House of Commons | 703 cc305-20WH

Motion that this House has considered the matter of a roadmap to peace in Palestine

### [Abraham Accords](#)

25 Oct 2021 | House of Commons | 702 cc113-8

Adjournment debate

### [Palestine](#)

7 Jul 2021 | House of Lords | 813 cc1279-81

Oral questions on what plans the government has to recognise Palestine as a state

### [Israel and Palestine](#)

14 Jun 2021 | House of Commons | 697 cc2-22WH

Motion that this House has considered e-petitions 585313 [UK Government to formally recognise the State of Palestine] and 585314 [Sanctions against Israel]

### [Queen's Speech \(Debate on foreign affairs and defence\)](#)

19 May 2021 | House of Lords | 812 cc589-674

Lords contributions on the Middle East, including Baroness Warsi's speech on UK recognition of Palestine

### [Israel and Palestine: United States' Proposals for Peace](#)

27 Feb 2020 | House of Lords | 802 cc352-84

Lords motion to take note of the United States' proposals for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, announced on 28 January

### [Palestinian Territories](#)

7 Jun 2018 | House of Lords | 791 cc1411-54

Lords motion to take note of the situation in the Palestinian Territories

### [Balfour Declaration](#)

30 Oct 2017 | House of Commons | 630 cc608-21

Statement on the Balfour declaration

### [Palestine and Israel](#)

13 Oct 2014 | House of Commons | 586 cc62-131

Motion that this House believes that the Government should recognise the state of Palestine alongside the state of Israel

## 7

# Early Day Motions

### Israel

**EDM 842 (session 2021-22)**

**12 Jan 2022**

**Paul Girvan**

That this House notes that in a poll from the Palestine News Network, 93 per cent of the people in Jerusalem who are ethnically Arab prefer Israeli rule; and calls on the Government to use this statistic and the simple principle of self-determination whenever hard left Governments call for East Jerusalem to be part of an Arab state and to give strong opposition to such a proposal.

### Israel and Palestine

**EDM 218 (session 2021-22)**

**21 Jun 2021**

**Debbie Abrahams**

That this House expresses its profound concern at recent events in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel; welcomes the ceasefire which began on 21 May 2021; calls for every effort to be made to end all attacks and forms of aggression, address the underlying causes and hold those responsible fully accountable; recognises that genuine calm and de-escalation can only be achieved with the full realisation of Palestinian rights and the end of Israel's systematic discrimination against Palestinians in Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territory; and calls on the UK Government to work to end the 54 years of occupation and 14 years of the blockade of the Gaza Strip, lift the blockade of Gaza and allow the free flow of goods both way and ensure the tunnels under the Gaza-Egyptian border are closed off permanently with international monitoring, strengthen support for UNRWA and work with international partners to put it on a sustainable long-term financial footing to ensure the dignity of Palestinian refugees until such a time as a just and sustainable solution is achieved, work to ensure the holding of free and fair Presidential and Parliamentary Palestinian elections throughout the occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem, end Israel's systematic discrimination against Palestinians including its own Palestinian citizens, ensuring all mob attacks are fully investigated and use every diplomatic method to bring about a peace process that can resolve this conflict on the basis of international law, justice and the end of all discrimination to ensure a secure and lasting peace.

**City of Dundee Palestinian recognition**

**EDM 109 (session 2021-22)**

**25 May 2021**

**Chris Law**

That this House notes that the city of Dundee has become the first city in Scotland to officially recognise the state of Palestine; further notes that this follows the 40-year anniversary of the twinning of Dundee with the Palestinian city of Nablus in 1980; commends all those involved locally in Dundee who maintain important links between the two cities; believes that a two-state solution is made more possible if both sides are treated as equals; and calls on the Government to follow the City of Dundee's lead and officially recognise Palestine as an independent and equal nation state.

**Israel's Nation State Law**

**EDM 1556 (session 2017-19)**

**24 Jul 2018**

**Alex Sobel**

That this House notes with concern the Nation State Law passed in the Israeli Knesset by just 62 votes to 55; further notes this law enshrines the concept that Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people as a basic law and alters the application of the Basic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty in court rulings, and permits judges to give priority to Israel's Jewish character in their rulings; notes in addition that Benjamin Netanyahu has stated that the Palestinian Authority must acknowledge aspects of the law as a condition for a future peace agreement, putting the two state solution at risk; declares that democracies by their character treat all their citizens equally before the law and are committed to the pluralism of peoples and that this law abandons those basic tenets; and therefore calls on the Government to urge the Israeli Government to repeal the Nation State Law and to enshrine equal status to all its citizens.

## 8 Further reading

### 8.1 House of Commons Library

[Roadmap to peace in Palestine](#)

CDP-0187 (2021)

12 November 2021

[Israel: 2021 parliamentary election and new coalition government](#)

CBP-9189

14 June 2021

[E-petitions relating to Israel and Palestine](#)

CDP-0085 (2021)

11 June 2021

[Annexation of the West Bank](#)

CBP-8927

10 June 2020

[The Occupied Palestinian Territories: recent developments](#)

CBP-7689

20 March 2017

[International status of Palestine](#)

SN-6992

3 October 2014

[Palestinian statehood](#)

SN-6051

11 August 2011

### 8.2 European Union

[Middle East Peace process](#)

European Union External Action Service [EEAS]

8 February 2021

## 8.3

# Human rights and civil society organisations

**Israel's apartheid against Palestinians: a cruel system of domination and a crime against humanity**

Amnesty International

1 February 2022

**List of supporters of the campaign for the recognition of the state of Palestine as the 194th UN full member**

SOLIDAR

16 July 2021

**A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution**

Human Rights Watch

4 April 2021

**A regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is apartheid**

B'Tselem [Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories]

12 January 2021

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