



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about military courts in Israel and the report by War on Want.

I note the points you have raised and highlighted in the report. The UK is very concerned about the challenges facing human rights defenders (HRDs) and organisations operating in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I am assured that Ministers and British officials continuously urge the Israeli Government to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of HRDs, of which the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) is a fervent champion everywhere.

The UK has also raised concerns with the Palestinian Authority (PA) about the treatment of HRDs in the West Bank.

I appreciate your concerns about HRDs and Palestinians detained and prosecuted in military courts in Israel. The UK has concerns about reports of ill-treatment of those in Israeli military detention. In terms of prosecution, it is also crucial that in circumstances such as these that there is adequate legal due process to make sure that people's rights can be fairly heard. The Government continues raise these points with the Israeli authorities.

The UK has been clear that we remain concerned about Israel's extensive use of administrative detention which, according to international law, should be used only when security makes this absolutely necessary rather than as routine practice and as a preventive rather than a punitive measure. Detainees should either be charged or released. UK officials have also made clear our concern over the continued transfer of Palestinian detainees to prisons inside Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The UK will continue to call on the Israeli authorities to comply with their obligations under international law.

The UK also funds projects providing legal aid to those, especially minors, detained and prosecuted in this manner and capacity building to local lawyers.

It is for reasons such as the above that Israel and the OPTs remain a human rights priority for the FCDO, as documented in the most recent Human Rights and Democracy Report last year. The UK will continue to monitor these issues closely and raise them with the relevant authorities.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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