



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

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Rt Hon. Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 28 October to the Foreign Secretary, on behalf of a number of your constituents, about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I am replying as the Minister for the Middle East and North Africa.

The UK is aware of the decision by the Israeli authorities to designate six Civil Society Organisations. We are in contact with the Government of Israel to understand the basis of the designations. We have made clear that human rights and civil society organisations have a vital role to play in the development of thriving, open societies.

Israel's long-standing commitment to democratic values is one of its great strengths as a fellow democracy, and we continue to make clear that a strong, vibrant civil society is in Israel's own interest. As a friend of Israel, we are concerned by any developments that may undermine this commitment.

Yours ever,

The Rt Hon. James Cleverly MP
Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa

