



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development

21 August 2020

Our reference: MC2020/15976

The Rt Hon. Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear George

Thank you for your correspondence of 4 August to the Foreign Secretary, on behalf of a number of your constituents, about Mr Mahmoud Nawajaa. I am replying as the Minister responsible for our relations with the Middle East and North Africa.

We are aware of reports of Mr Nawajaa's arrest. Our Consulate General in Jerusalem are monitoring the case closely and believe a court hearing is due to take place imminently. 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. We continue to call on the Israeli authorities to comply with their obligations under international law and either charge or release detainees.

We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons. Officials from the British Embassy in Tel Aviv raised the issue of treatment of Palestinian detainees on 18 June with both the Israeli Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We also remain concerned by the continued transfer of Palestinian detainees to prisons inside Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. We continue to raise our concerns in our engagement with the Israeli authorities.

Israel retains a strong civil society. However, over the past couple of years there has been a steady increase in pressure against certain Non-Governmental Organisations or lobby groups, particularly those critical of Israel's conduct in its occupation of the Palestinian Territories. This includes rhetoric and restriction of their activities. We continue to make clear that a strong, vibrant civil society is in Israel's own interest. As

a friend of Israel, we would be concerned by any developments that may undermine this commitment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of two distinct parts. The first part is a stylized, cursive 'J' followed by a few loops. The second part is a more complex, flowing signature that ends in a large, sweeping loop.

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