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The Rt. Hon. Alan Duncan MP
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Wednesday 31st August 2011

Dear Minister,

I am writing to express our strongest support for your video message on the DfID Operational Plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territories 2011-2015, and your comments concerning the illegal wall constructed by Israel in the West Bank.

It is with regret that we have followed the developments that have forced the removal of the video from the department's website. It is of serious concern that the accuracy of your remarks on the wall's illegality and its violating international law through incursion into Palestinian territory, a judgment upheld by the 2004 ruling of the International Court of Justice, should be seized upon and the video subsequently removed.

We have on many occasions written to the Foreign Secretary seeking clarification of the government's support for the two-state solution and its responsibility in ensuring Israeli compliance with international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

We commended the Foreign Secretary, William Hague, for the support given by the British Government to the UN Security Council resolution of 18th February 2011, declaring the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem as illegal in our letter of 21st February 2011.

We fully support the text of that resolution which calls for:

"Israel, as the occupying power, [to] immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and that it fully respect its legal obligations in this regard."

It is greatly unfortunate that in recent days your comments on illegal building activity by Israel in the OPTs and its treatment of Palestinians living under occupation have come under attack. Let us assure you of our full support for your remarks and your work in alleviating poverty and aid dependency in the OPTs.

Yours sincerely,

Mohammed Asif
CEO