

The Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
King Charles Street
London
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14th August 2026

Dear Ed,

Many congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State.

I am writing following deeply disturbing reports of Israeli settlers besieging Palestinian homes in the West Bank village of Qusra, and to ask that you make decisive representations to the Israeli authorities to help bring this to an immediate end.

Since Sunday 9th August, dozens of Israeli settlers have besieged three Palestinian families – around 15 people including two children – in the Ras al-Ain area of western Qusra, cutting off their water and electricity supplies. Residents have described being blocked from leaving their homes and running critically low on food and basic supplies. By Thursday 13th August, the siege had continued for five nights, and reports indicate that Israeli forces subsequently entered the village, declared it a closed military zone, and required residents from two of the three besieged homes to leave, rather than securing their right to remain safely in their own properties.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has described the settlers' actions as criminal, stating that they clearly intended to force the families from their homes and land, and has warned that these families are at real risk of forcible displacement. The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has also condemned the violence in the strongest terms.

Stephen Doughty MP has publicly stated that he is appalled by reports of the violence in Qusra and called for civilians to be protected, perpetrators to be held to account, and for international law to be upheld. I welcomed his statement of 30th July, and Ambassador Sarah MacIntosh's statement to the UN Security Council on 11th August which set out the scale of the crisis: over 1,300 settler-related incidents recorded by OCHA in July alone, affecting more than 250 Palestinian communities, and 104 new settlements approved in the past four years, an increase of 80%.

I note that an Israeli government spokesperson has described the settlers' conduct in Qusra as deplorable and unacceptable, and said those responsible should be

investigated. Yet it is the besieged Palestinian families, not the settlers responsible for the siege, who have now been made to leave their homes. This cannot be allowed to stand as the outcome.

My constituents have made plain to me – as I am sure many others have made plain to you – that it is action, not words, which will make a difference to the Palestinian people. I would, therefore, ask that you:

- Publicly and unequivocally condemn the siege of these families' homes and the manner of their removal;
- Press the Israeli government, as a matter of urgency, to secure the families' safe return to their homes and the restoration of water, power and essential services;
- Seek assurances that those responsible for the siege will be prosecuted, not merely investigated, and that the pattern of impunity for settler violence documented by the UN is decisively addressed; and
- Continue to press, bilaterally and through the UN Security Council, for a halt to settlement expansion, including the E1 plan, consistent with the UK's stated position that such settlements are illegal under international law and undermine the viability of a two-state solution.

Before recess, I attended a debate in the Chamber on banning trade with illegal Israeli settlements. I was encouraged by the near consensus across the House, and by the then Minister for Trade's confirmation that the Government is actively considering bans on the import and export of goods and services linked to the settlements. Both on this issue and on support for besieged families, you have an opportunity to go further for the Palestinian people – something I believe would be welcomed by most of our colleagues across Parliament, so I want to encourage you to take these decisive steps as soon as possible.

Kind regards,



James Naish MP

Member of Parliament for Rushcliffe