

The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

13th October 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the British Palestinian Committee (formerly 'British Palestinian Council') regarding your recent announcement of a possible relocation of the UK Embassy to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

As British Palestinians with significant professional and personal experience in this matter, we are gravely concerned by this potential breach of UN Security Council resolutions by one of its permanent members and dereliction of duty to the Palestinian people. We urge the UK Government to reject relocation of the UK Embassy to Israel for the following reasons:

1. Impact on Palestinians and the prospects of a just future. Relocating the embassy would represent outright support for Israel's systemic disruption and erasure of Palestinian cultural and political life in the city, an endorsement of decades of violations of international law, and a green light to the ongoing laws, policies and practices that meet the legal definition of apartheid, as referenced by an ever-growing international body of evidence.

For Palestinians, this is not a mere matter of policy. Since the beginning of this year, more than 90 women, men and children have been killed by Israeli military forces across the occupied West Bank, making 2022 already the deadliest year since 2015. To reward a state as it commits such atrocities would not only be immoral, but irresponsible, actively prolonging this dangerous reality for Palestinians and preventing the prospect of any kind of just future in the region.

2. Contravention of International Law and the undermining of international mechanisms. A decision to relocate the embassy would directly contravene international law on this matter, while also undermining the status and importance of international law and universal mechanisms for justice as a whole. It would call into question the credibility and consistency of the UK, which is emphatically supporting international law in the case of Ukraine while sending a message that the UK's allies and key trading partners are above the law.

3. Departure from long-held British policy and international consensus. The UK, along with the vast majority of the international community, has always considered Israel's occupation and unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem to be contrary to international law and declared any measures taken to alter the character and status of the city to be 'null and void'. A reversal of this policy carries significant and long-term risk to the credibility and reputation of the UK, particularly given the UK's historical responsibility concerning its colonial legacy in Palestine. In the shorter term, it also threatens to damage regional relationships, given the importance of Jerusalem within the wider Arab world.

In short, relocating the embassy - thereby endorsing Israel's current actions - threatens to severely compromise the safety of Palestinians, the credibility of the UK on the international stage, and the prospects of any kind of just future in the region. We seriously hope you will reconsider this move, for the sake of all parties involved.

Sincerely,



On behalf of the British Palestinian Committee

Sara Husseini
Director