



Foreign, Commonwealth
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Dear Ms Quinton,

Thank you for your correspondence of 27 August to the Prime Minister, about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). Your correspondence has been passed to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Correspondence Team to provide a response.

Journalists covering conflicts are afforded protection under International Humanitarian Law (IHL) because they are civilians, and all parties must avoid deliberate attacks against them and only detain them on justified grounds. The UK remains committed to Media Freedom and to championing democracy and human rights around the world. Independent media is essential to a functioning society and journalists must be able to investigate and report independently without fear. Alongside our partners, the UK co-signed a Media Freedom Coalition statement on 10 September 2024, relating to journalists in conflict zones. It called upon states to ensure the protection of journalists and media workers covering conflict.

Furthermore, media equipment and installations dedicated to civilian purposes are civilian objects and must not be the target of attacks or reprisals, unless they qualify as military objectives.

The UK respects the independence of the International Criminal Court (ICC) which is the primary international institution for investigating and prosecuting the most serious crimes of international concern. The UK will always meet its obligations under international law and the International Criminal Court Act 2001. The UK Government has been clear that Israel has a right to defend itself, in accordance with international law. There is no moral equivalence between Israel, a democracy, and Hamas and Lebanese Hizballah, which are terrorist organisations.

The situation in the region continues to evolve rapidly. But please rest assured that we will continue to do all that we can to push for peace.

Yours sincerely,

**Parliamentary Correspondence Team
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**