



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Her Excellency Michelle Bachelet  
High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais Wilson  
52 rue des Pâquis  
CH-1201 Geneva, Switzerland

25 September 2019

*Your Excellency*

**Re: UK parliamentarians urge immediate publication of a database listing companies involved in settlement-related activities that infringes human rights of Palestinians**

We write as a cross-party group of UK parliamentarians to urge your publication of a business and human rights database listing companies that are involved in settlement-related activities which adversely impacts the human rights of Palestinians living under occupation.

The database developed by your Office is an important practical mechanism to encourage companies to respect human rights in accordance with their responsibilities under the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights. Fairness has been rigorously incorporated into the mechanism: companies have been provided with a right to respond to your Office in respect of potential inclusion on the database; no sanction applies to a company listed on the database; and a company can be de-listed from the database as part of the mandated annual review provided by the March 2016 UN Human Rights Council resolution.

The database will have the catalytic effect of significantly promoting UN Security Council resolution 2334, by effectively countering illegal settlement expansion which is substantially enabled and facilitated by companies. The UN Security Council's call upon all States "to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of Israel and the territories occupied by Israel since 1967" further underscores the legitimacy of your Office publishing a business and human rights database listing companies involved in settlement-related activities in the occupied Palestinian territory that adversely impacts a wide range of human rights.

We observe that the UK government has briefly elaborated a couple of reasons for its opposition to the database: that the UN Human Rights Council should focus on States, rather than on companies; and that the March 2016 resolution does not expressly provide that the database be made public. Our assessment is that they do not amount to an adequate basis for justifiably opposing the publication of the database. Indeed, it is in the public interest of promoting basic values of transparency, accountability and corporate respect for human rights, that the database be published. In this regard, we note that the clear inference of the wording of the March 2016 resolution is that the database will be made public.



**Britain-Palestine**  
All Party Parliamentary Group

There is an urgent and critical need for both effective action against illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, and the fostering of corporate respect for human rights. We therefore urge and support, in accordance with your mandate, that your Office immediately publishes its business and human rights database listing companies involved in settlement-related activities that adversely impacts the human rights of Palestinians.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Burden MP

**Chair, Britain-Palestine All-Party Parliamentary Group**

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