1. Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) was established in 1935 to develop and provide the highest level of health care standards and practice for all the peoples of the region, to invest in medical research and in teaching of future generations.

2. Today, incorporating all medical and surgical sub-specialties, HMO – with two campuses, in Ein Kerem and Mount Scopus - is a tertiary care referral facility, known for pioneering new medical techniques, providing innovative treatment, and offering patients new levels of medical care. Some one million patients are treated at HMO each year.

3. HMO is a national referral center for the most complex and challenging medical cases, in addition to serving the one million residents of the greater Jerusalem area. We also treat patients from Palestine, neighboring regions and other countries around the world. Housing the only Level IA trauma center in the greater Jerusalem area, HMO has created many centers of excellence and has developed unique facilities, many of which are the only services of their kind in the entire country or in the greater Jerusalem area. A premier teaching hospital and research center performing more than half the hospital based research in the country, HMO is equipped with the most sophisticated diagnostic, treatment and research equipment. Hadassah is dedicated to helping and healing, to changing - and saving - people's lives.

4. Since inception, despite many challenges, HMO has successfully catered to all the different peoples of the greater Jerusalem area and Israel – Jews, Christians and Muslims, Israelis and Palestinians. Our staff reflects the multicultural populations of the region.

5. HMO was asked to submit evidence to demonstrate the wide range of humanitarian educational, health and development-related activities we carry out with our Palestinian counterparts. Over the years numerous cooperative programs have been established between physicians, hospitals and medical personnel in the region. Higher training is available for residents and Fellows from Palestine who learn advanced professional skills at Hadassah.

6. At the same time whenever needed HMO continues to provide sophisticated tertiary medical care to Palestinians from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. HMO has also been involved in assisting to create medical programs
and facilities within Palestine and help train Palestinian medical personnel in a range of fields. Such cooperation has been carried out with Al Mokassad Hospital, Augusta Victoria, St. Johns Eye Hospital and Red Crescent Hospitals.

7. The success of existing Palestinian-Israeli collaborations reinforces the importance of continuing and expanding these activities. On 5 May 2013, the Palestinian Authority Minister of Health, Dr. Hani Abdeen visited Hadassah, accompanied by senior officials from the Palestinian Authority. Dr. Abdeen met with Dr. Yuval Weiss, HMO Acting Director General at the time and Director of Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital, and emphasized the importance of cooperation with Hadassah in the field of medicine, medical research and teaching. He also expressed the desire to further the cooperation between HMO and the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Health. Dr. Weiss welcomed the Minister and officials and emphasized that "Hadassah considers cooperation with our Palestinian neighbors as a top priority. Medicine is a bridge to peace. There are no borders when it comes to treating patients." Dr. Weiss also stated that at any given moment there are some 60 Palestinian doctors doing their residency at Hadassah.

8. Dr. Abdeen thanked the HMO staff for the opportunity to visit and commended the hospital for its treatments and capabilities. The minister then visited Palestinians hospitalized at Hadassah and distributed gifts.

9. HMO is submitting this evidence to DFID as Palestinian-Israeli collaboration at HMO is today stronger than ever. It is our belief that the strong foundations upon which these programs have been created, based on humanitarianism, respect, trust, and bilateral sharing, create innovative local cooperation that benefit both partners, today and for the future.

10. In order to better explain our activities and the rationale behind them, we have chosen to present our model of the advanced training of Palestinian Medical Professionals. Every year Palestinian physicians come to HMO for their residency or to carry out fellowships in various sub-specializations.

11. The various fields of training are usually decided based on the interest of the doctor applying, the areas of need for specializations required in Palestine, as well as of course as the current need for residents and fellows at the various medical departments of the Hadassah Hospitals. Departments and Units which have trained Palestinian physicians have included cardiology, dermatology, nephrology, hematology-oncology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, pediatrics, surgery, pathology, urology, and others.
12. Once funding is secured for training, HMO begins reviewing applications it receives from the Palestinian physicians interested in receiving advanced training at Hadassah, based on purely professional criteria. Following acceptance of the physician to a specific program, HMO assists the physician to obtain all the necessary approvals to allow them to come to Hadassah including the required license from the Medical Professional Licensing Division of the Israel Ministry of Health and security clearance to enter Jerusalem on a regular basis.

13. The training program lasts from 2 1/2 and up to 6 years, depending on the field of specialty and on whether the physician is doing a fellowship or residency. During this period the Palestinian physicians are considered regular salaried HMO staff members, participating in all the organization's ongoing activities and fulfilling all normal requirements of a resident or senior physician in a Department. They are an integral part of the professional team and together treat all patients that come to HMO requiring medical care.

14. The Palestinian physicians are trained at the Hadassah campuses in Jerusalem, and quickly gain the tools to bring the highest level of care available to patients in their own communities. They live at home and come to train daily at Hadassah, but in parallel they also begin to integrate into the Palestinian medical health-care system.

15. Over the years, the training of these doctors at Hadassah has made a major contribution to the advancement of medicine in the West Bank and Gaza and to the development of medical specialties which were not previously available such as Dermatology, Endocrinology, Hematology, Radiology, Anesthesiology, ENT, Gynecology and Neurosurgery. One doctor who specialized in Neurosurgery went on to head the Neurosurgery Department at the Beit Jalla Hospital; another physician who specialized in Neurology is one of the most prominent physicians in the West Bank in his field; the Director of the Hebron Hospital specialized in Gynecology at Hadassah; and two neurosurgeons are presently working in other West Bank Medical Centers. Today, the Head of Dermatological Medicine in the Palestinian Authority - who is also the Chairman of the Palestinian Society for Dermatology - is doing a two year special fellowship at Hadassah, and he comes to Jerusalem from Ramallah for two days each week.

16. The Palestinian physicians who have trained at Hadassah have formed warm relationships with their colleagues and often return after their training to participate in Departmental meetings, to present problematic patients, have the opportunity to hear what is going on in the department and, most importantly, keep abreast of new developments in their field of expertise.
17. The following examples – just two of many - exemplify the vital importance and the results of the ongoing collaboration between Hadassah physicians and its Palestinian counterparts. Their joint ultimate goal is to fight the disease, to save and improve lives.

18. A Palestinian physician in his last year of residency at Hadassah in the field of pediatric cardiology, regularly receives requests for consultations from hospitals across the West Bank. He has also opened his own clinic in Ramallah where he sees young patients. So for three days a week he travels across the West Bank and sees patients in his clinic and for the rest of the week, he continues to train in his department at Hadassah.

19. This cross-border reality has been very beneficial for the critical infants this resident treats. Not too long ago he examined a critically ill infant and concluded that her only chance for survival was to be taken to Hadassah. He immediately presented the case to his colleagues at the hospital and everyone together decided, without hesitation, that the baby should be brought in immediately. A bed was made available in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and with necessary facilitation the baby was brought across the check-point to the hospital with her father. The baby underwent an ultrasound examination to see if she could undergo catheterization. When it was determined she could, a catheterization procedure was carried out immediately. At some stage in the near future, the goal is to be able to have the knowledge and tools to carry out this procedure at his new clinic.

20. Another example is the Cystic Fibrosis Center in Gaza which was opened by one of the Palestinian Physicians which trained in our Pediatric Center for Chronic Diseases. There used to be a time that Hadassah’s CF Center treated dozens of young patients from Gaza since there was no CF specialists there. When politics prevented these patients from coming to Israel, some traveled to Cairo to undergo CF treatments there – a 12-hour trip – but this soon became difficult, and then impossible. The parents of these chronically sick children turned to the international community for help in establishing a CF Center in Gaza. Together with Hadassah, a 1-year comprehensive training program was launched for three Palestinian physicians and practical training was provided for a nurse, a nutritionist, and a physiotherapist. Upon completion of their training, they returned to the Gaza Strip to establish an advanced CF Center. Ongoing communications with our own Center continues and an active professional relationship for the benefit of patients still exists.
21. HMO strongly believes that British Aid could be allocated in a manner that would be instrumental in helping promote peace efforts and coexistence, by supporting collaborative Israeli-Palestinian projects and programs such as the ones carried out by Hadassah, to benefit all its participants. We will be happy to further elaborate in writing or orally to the committee and are honored that you have approached us to contribute to this important debate.