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The Rt Hon. the Baroness Blackstone
House of Lords
London
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By email: blackstonet@parliament.uk

27 February 2024

Dear *Tessa,*

On Tuesday 20 February, during the second reading of the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill, I committed to write to clarify how the Bill distinguishes between Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and the Occupied Golan Heights.

The Government's assessment is that the Bill is entirely consistent with UN Security Council resolution 2334. The Bill draws a clear distinction between Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and the Occupied Golan Heights, by dealing with them in separate paragraphs.

This provision is necessary to ensure that the powers in the Bill cannot be used to exempt these territories from the ban without the full Parliamentary scrutiny of primary legislation. This is due to the particular impacts campaigns against these territories have on undermining community cohesion.

The Government does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories or the Occupied Golan Heights as part of Israel and this Bill does not change the Government's long-standing position on the settlements. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House library.

Warm regards

Lucy

Baroness Neville-Rolfe DBE CMG