

The Liberal Democrats condemn disproportionate force used by all sides, and have always stood firmly for values of liberalism, internationalism and support for the indivisibility of human rights and the rule of law. Because of this, we have continued to advocate strongly for a peaceful solution to the conflict and more broadly a stable and prosperous Middle East.

We believe any peace settlement should include an agreement based on 1967 borders, with mutually agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the capital of both states and a just settlement for refugees.

Israelis have the right to live in security and peace. This includes legitimate demands to defend itself in the face of violence from groups such as Hamas. Hamas's actions in allowing rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip to target Israeli civilians are completely unacceptable. Hamas must renounce its violence and accept Israel's right to exist.

We condemn Israel's continued illegal policy of settlement expansion, which undermines the possibility of a two-state solution. We firmly believe that the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) are illegal under international law, and present an obstacle to peace that takes us further away from a two-state solution.

We do not support trade sanctions on Israeli goods, as this makes achieving a peaceful solution harder. Instead, we are supportive of the voluntary guidelines which enable customers to identify whether goods come from the OPTs, and decide for themselves if they want to buy them.

We support recognition of the Independent State of Palestine, as and when it will help the prospect of a two-state solution. It must be a priority for both sides to return to the negotiating table for talks, and the international community must increase its efforts to see that this happens.

All warm wishes

Kate