

Layla Moran, Lib Dem – Oxford West & Abingdon

Did you know that I am Palestinian? My mother and that side of my family are from Jerusalem. Or were until 1967 of course, when we could not go back, having left in 1966. I am as much Palestinian as I am English. So I find your email touching on a personal level. Thank you for campaigning for us.

To your questions below, I'd hope it would now be obvious. I will do whatever I can as an MP to advance the Palestinian cause. This includes fighting for recognition, stopping illegal settlements and of course upholding hard won human rights.

I will fight for recognition as soon as possible, a boycott of any goods made in illegal settlements, and as someone who wants a world without any nuclear weapons I would like to see the UN take a more robust approach to Israel's nuclear stockpile. I believe Britain should stop arms trade with all countries that are in volatile regions and that includes Israel.

But that said, it is important to remember the Israelis suffer too. Extremist factions of Hamas and other groups with their reactionary makeshift bombs do nothing to help the vast majority of Palestinians. I condemn these lunatics as much as the extreme actions of the Israeli right wing government. But I refuse to believe all Israelis condone the suffering of the Palestinians in Gaza and elsewhere. If we ever stop believing in basic human goodness and compassion then the hope for peace is lost forever.

As an MP of Palestinian descent, I hope to be able to speak out as a voice of calm and reason. I intend to and am already reaching out to the Jewish community in the UK to be a bridge to peace. The Palestinian community in the UK is very excited by the prospect of my candidacy as one tiny step on the path to greater understanding for the complex issues at play.