

Thank you for contacting me about Israel and Palestine. Undoubtedly this is one of the biggest foreign policy challenges we face, and I am grateful that you have taken the time to write and for giving me the opportunity to set out my views to you.

Labour is committed to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on a two-state solution: a secure Israel alongside a secure and viable state of Palestine. We believe there are enough progressive people on all sides to shift the debate away from extreme and entrenched positions towards a lasting peace. All sides must avoid taking action that would make peace harder to achieve. That means an end to blockade and occupation, and an end to rocket and terror attacks.

We are clear that the expansion of Israeli settlements on the Palestinian West Bank is not only wrong and illegal, but represents a threat to the very viability of the hopes of securing the two-state solution and to a successful outcome of the peace process. Further settlement building will therefore inevitably be interpreted as suggesting a lack of commitment from the Israeli government towards that peace process.

Labour resolutely opposes the isolation of Israel. No one should question Israel's right to exist. Labour has been clear that the threat of boycotts of Israel is the wrong response and we believe this would not help advance the peace process. The international community must now take concrete steps to strengthen moderate Palestinian opinion. We are clear that Palestinian recognition at the UN would be such a step.

Thank you again for contacting me about this issue. As your candidate I am grateful for every opportunity to set out my position to you. Ultimately, this General Election is a choice between a Labour Party who will stand up for the many and a Conservative Party which only looks after the privileged few, and I hope you will consider putting your trust in me, and in Labour.

Best wishes,

Sara

Sara Hyde
Labour PPC - Bromley and Chislehurst.