



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about health workers in Gaza.

I am deeply distressed by the deaths and injuries in Gaza, the violence is shocking and tragic. There are a number of important facts which need to be established urgently, including why live fire was used. Israel has a legitimate right to defend itself, however the number of those killed and injured demonstrates that we desperately need Israel to show greater restraint.

My colleagues in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office regularly stress the need for safe and unimpeded passage for medical personnel, especially for those operating in Gaza. I know that our Ambassador to Israel raised this issue with the office for the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) in September last year. I also understand that the targeting of health workers was raised with COGAT by our officials in Tel Aviv last August.

I would like to assure you that the Government will continue to support the healthcare of Palestinians in Gaza. The UK provides funding to Physicians for Human Rights Israel (PHRI) to enable access to healthcare in Gaza and protect the right to health. You are right though that essential healthcare services remain stretched, which is why the UK's support for Gaza's hospitals and patients through the International Committee of the Red Cross is more important than ever.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY