

Former members of Israeli Knesset: “We support position of UK Labour Party to ban import of settlement products in response to Israeli annexation”

1 July 2020

We, the undersigned former Members of the Israeli Knesset, come together in appreciation and support for your recently stated position that settlement products should be banned as imports to the UK in response to any Israeli annexation (or extension of Israeli sovereignty) into Occupied Palestinian Territories in the West Bank. As MKs who served for the Israeli Labour Party and Meretz, the sister parties in Israel of the UK Labour Party, we stand firm in our shared commitment to a rules-based international order and to a two-state solution to this conflict, in the context of international agreed-upon parameters that will guarantee equality, dignity, and security for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Banning settlement products is not a ban or boycott against Israel in general, nor is it the singling out of the Jewish state. Such a measure is an accepted non-violent tool deployed in the international arena to respond to egregious violations of human rights abuses, occupation, and annexation. Contrary to criticism that is being levelled at your position, in taking action against Israel’s illegal settlements, you are helping to make a crucial distinction between Israel’s violations of international law beyond the green line as opposed to the international recognition of and acceptance of Israel within the green line.

Israeli settlements in the West Bank are illegal under international law and pose a significant obstacle to peace. The settlements are also central to the discriminatory regime in the West Bank, in which two communities live side-by-side but under different and discriminatory legal systems. Annexation will entrench and make permanent this reality, thereby formalising a regime of Apartheid.

Thank you for standing in solidarity with the possibility of a peaceful future for Israel and for your rejection of those values which stand in opposition to that future and to justice.

Yours respectfully,

Zouheir Bahloul

Avraham Burg, former Speaker of Knesset and former Chair of the Jewish Agency

Roman Bronfman

Naomi Chazan, former Deputy Speaker of Knesset

Ran Cohen, former Israeli Minister of Industry and Trade, retired Colonel in the IDF and former Chair of the Meretz Party

Issawi Frej

Zehava Galon, former Chair of the Meretz Party

Haim Oron, former Israeli Minister of Agriculture and former Chair of the Meretz Party

Mossi Raz

Mickey Rosenthal

Michal Rozin

Tzali Reshef

Yair Tzaban, former Israeli Minister of Immigrant Absorption