

Oifig an Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Aire Cosanta
Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence



Ms. Miriam Reilly
Meetings Administrator
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
Tallaght,
Dublin 24
D24YNN5

8th December 2021

Reference No: DFA-MCO-12797-2021
Your Reference No: M04/1021"

Dear Ms. Reilly,

On behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Mr. Simon Coveney T.D., I would like to thank you for your correspondence of 14 October (reference no.: M04/1021) in relation to the motion agreed at the Council meeting of South Dublin County Council held on 11 October which was forwarded from the Department of Taoiseach.

The question of boycotts of Israeli goods has been discussed on many occasions in the Oireachtas. The Government does not support such a policy in relation to Israel. However, in Ireland's own history, boycotts have historically been seen as a legitimate form of political expression, and specifically a non-violent one. We defend the right of those who call for a boycott, in making use of their right to free speech.

Ireland's position on the illegality of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) informs our engagement with the State of Israel across a range of bilateral issues, and will continue to do so. The EU and its Member States, including Ireland, are wholly opposed to Israeli settlements, which are contrary to international law, and are damaging to the prospects of peace.

Ireland distinguishes between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967, in line with international law and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. This position is common across all Government Departments. Consequently, Ireland ensures that any bilateral agreements with Israel do not apply to territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

The Minister visited Israel, oPt, and Jordan from 1-5 November 2021. In his engagements with the Israeli authorities, the Minister underlined Ireland's deep concern at settlement expansion, demolitions and evictions in the oPt, and asked the Israeli government to cease unilateral actions, such as the recent announcement on settlements. He emphasised the importance of civil society space and the vital role played by NGOs in any democracy, and expressed concern at the recent designation of six Palestinian organisations as terrorist entities.

Ireland will remain seized of these matters, including in the context of our tenure on the United Nations Security Council.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ciarán Doyle'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Ciarán' written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name 'Doyle'.

Ciarán Doyle
Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs
