



Organising Manual

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Organising Manual Contents

Introduction/Using the toolkit	3
Section 1 - “How to” Guides – Influencing people	4
Who can you influence?	5
How to influence people	6
Dining for Israel	7
Lobbying MPs	8
Section 2 - “How to” Guides - Communications skills	9
General communication skills	10
Dos and Don'ts in a crisis	12
Letter writing	13
Dealing with the media	14
Interviews	14
Photos and press releases	16
Basics of leaflets and direct mail	17
Basics of sending campaign emails	18
Using social media	19
Blogs	19
Twitter	19
Facebook	19
Instagram	20
Dealing with anti-Israel arguments	21
Making a speech	22
Section 3 - “How to” Guides - Local organising	23
Setting up a local campaign group	24
Organising a local meeting	25
House meetings	25
Supporter mobilisation meetings	25
Organising a street stall	26
Section 4 - “How to” Guides – Influencing other organisations	27
Communicating with other faith groups	28
Joining a political party	29
Joining a trade union	30
Organising on campus	31
Section 5 - Fact Sheets	32
Jewishness, Zionism and Israel	33
Iran	35
Hamas	37
Security	38
The IDF	39
BDS	40
History	41
The Peace Process	44
Settlements	46
The progressive case for Israel	47
Section 6 – Resources	49
Key website addresses	50
How to source and check sources	54

Introduction/Using the toolkit

This toolkit is intended to give pro-Israel campaigners the essential information and advice needed to campaign for Israel both all-year-round and in the event of a crisis when Israel hits the headlines.

It consists of “how to” guides setting out the basics of each kind of campaign activity and fact sheets about key aspects of Israel’s case.

The absolute key to us shifting opinions on Israel is to develop individual personal relationships with people. This will make us better placed to influence them.

There is an understandable desire by everyone to do the glamorous national side of campaigning for Israel: speaking to the media, speaking to MPs.

But this means in the past we have neglected the base of opinion-formers that creates the political environment that MPs and the media are influenced by, and who are often more accessible to ordinary supporters of Israel. These people include our neighbours, work colleagues, local opinion-formers, and our local MPs and ward councillors.

We Believe in Israel’s purpose is to develop and support a grassroots network advocating for Israel.

In a democracy decision-makers are influenced by grassroots public opinion or what they think the public think.

To change the balance of public opinion in the UK we need everyone who supports Israel to develop relationships in their local area, reaching out to the wider non Jewish community, especially with opinion-formers.

For most supporters of Israel, the most useful thing you can do is to focus on those local relationships. We need you to reach out to your non-Jewish friends and colleagues, and to your local MP, councillors and other opinion-formers.

If your local MP supports Israel in a crisis, they need the political cover of being able to demonstrate public support from their constituents for their stance. Write to them and thank them. During Operation Cast Lead the then Hendon MP Andrew Dismore had the largest number of Jewish constituents of any MP but received no letters supporting Israel or thanking him for his stance until after the crisis, and many letters of criticism. We make it more difficult for our friends to speak up for us when we don’t communicate with them.

Remember you don’t need to be an expert to have influence - nobody knows everything, so don’t worry and don’t pretend. Be yourself and smile!

Section 1

“How to” Guides -
Influencing people

Who can you influence?

The starting point is to analyse who your friends and contacts are.

After mapping who you know, you need to categorise what you know about their views about Israel:

- If they are already supporters, you need to think about how to mobilise them to campaign alongside you.
- If you don't know where they stand, or you know they are undecided, you need to work out which arguments for Israel will resonate most with them based on what you know about their views on other issues.
- If you know they are instinctively hostile, you need to assess whether they are so committed to this view that they are not worth arguing with, or whether they are open to hearing the other side of the story.

Once you have made this assessment, you need to decide what form of communication will work best with which person. In some cases it might be very formal lobbying, such as attending an MP or other local elected representative's public surgery or writing to them. In other cases, particularly with personal friends, it could be far more informal, for instance a discussion over a drink or at a dinner party.

You also need to look at who you don't know but should know. Who are the potential influencers in your area? Think in terms of local MPs, councillors, churches and other faith groups, newspaper editors. Look at ways you can engage with them on an all-year-round basis so that when a crisis comes involving Israel they already know you, will listen to you and respect your opinions.

People often over-focus on elected representatives and overlook the wider circle of local opinion-formers who are listened to and can influence those elected representatives. The letters page in your local paper will often give you a good idea of who the vocal local opinion-formers are. These are a set of people to try to engage with and cultivate. It is worth thinking carefully about who is most appropriate to contact them if they have not been contacted before: think about who in your local network of supporters would be most likely to get a meeting or have their invitation accepted by a target local opinion-former contact.

How to influence people

There are a number of key steps to consider every time you try to influence someone:

- 1) Decide exactly what your goal or objective is.
- 2) Define your message.
- 3) Identify your target audience.
- 4) Tailor your message to the audience.
- 5) Identify the most effective delivery mechanism for that message and that audience – is it a letter, a meeting, a phone call, media coverage?
- 6) Execute the communication
- 7) Evaluate how well it worked – did you shift opinions?

Social psychologist Dr Robert Cialdini has spent his entire career researching the science of influence earning him an international reputation as an expert in the fields of persuasion, compliance, and negotiation.

His book “Influence – The Psychology of Persuasion” (William Morrow & Co, revised edition. 1993) is an excellent guide to how to influence and persuade people.

In it, he identifies six fundamental principles that determine human behaviour and therefore need to be remembered when trying to influence people:

- 1) Reciprocation. People try to repay, in kind, what another person has provided them. (Respect and listening can come into this category)
- 2) Consistency. People feel a nearly obsessive desire to be, and appear to be, consistent with what they have already done or a stance they have already taken.
- 3) Social proof. One way in which people decide what is correct is to find out what other people think is correct (especially when they view those others as similar to themselves- this is where role models come in).
- 4) Liking. People prefer to say yes to requests from someone they know and like.
- 5) Authority or ‘perceived authority’, confidence and being seen as an authoritative source. Almost all people have a deep-seated sense of duty to authority.
- 6) Scarcity. Opportunities seem more valuable to people when their availability is limited (exclusivity- hence personal invitations to your home for dinner).

Dining for Israel

One of the most effective ways to engage people in a discussion about Israel is to invite them into your own home for dinner.

We would suggest you invite a mixed group with half the guests being supporters of Israel who will be patient enough to spend time trying to convince the other half who should be people who are undecided.

The JC ran an interesting article about organising dinner parties to discuss Israel, which is well worth reading:

<http://www.thejc.com/lifestyle/lifestyle-features/42738/how-ease-divisions-over-israel-have-a-dinner-party>

Remember this is all about relationships. People are very flattered to be invited to dinner. Don't underestimate your own influence. Most people want to be asked. Most people are not hostile to Israel. Unless you reach out you will never be able to persuade people of Israel's case and it leaves the field clear for our and Israel's opponents' messages.

Lobbying MPs

There are a number of ways in which you can lobby MPs (and other elected representatives and candidates for public office). Please do not be daunted: the most powerful tool in our democracy is a handwritten letter to your MP. We are all capable of being influential.

- Writing them a letter (all at House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA) or email (all MPs' email addresses are on the <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/> website)
- Asking to meet them at their local surgery in the constituency – usually at the Town Hall or a local library. It will be on their website or in the local paper (check they are happy to see people about issues as well as just personal casework)
- Asking to meet them at the House of Commons
- Asking them to visit a community organisation you are involved in
- Ask them to your home or for dinner

The more personal the communication, the more chance it will get read i.e. personally tailored letters have more impact than postcard campaigns or generic letters. Make friends with them.

You need to research the MP you are going to approach and work out what angle to take:

- Do they have a relevant policy interest? - Google their own websites/House of Commons website, what debates have they taken part in? What EDMs have they signed?
- Are they a member of a relevant All Party Group?
- Have they ever spoken for or against Israel in the Commons?

Good starting points for research about MPs, including contact details are <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/> and <http://www.parliament.uk/>.

All MPs have to get re-elected so they care about what their constituents think. The main reason they will agree to see someone is if you are one of their constituents – always state this at the start of any communication. If you can evidence that there are a reasonable number of local voters who share your views on Israel this will have an impact. Please remember that MPs are representatives not delegates though – they may have their own strong views already and will react very badly to bullying, electoral threats or coercion!

Any contact with an MP, other elected representative or candidate needs to have an “ask”. You need to think about what you want them to do. Do you want them to

- Write to a local paper
- Vote in a particular way?
- Sign an Early Day Motion?
- Speak in a debate?
- Table a Written or Oral Question to Ministers?
- Lobby Officials or Ministers or Shadow Ministers in writing or in person?
- Come to a meeting
- Sign a petition
- Or ‘not’ to do the above, depending on the issue

Section 2

“How to” Guides – Communications skills

General Communication Skills

Know your audience - whether talking to an individual or a group. Good communicators know what their audience thinks, why they think it and how they react; they know how to tailor their message.

Establish your objective before you start. Again, it is the same for a group or an individual. You need to know what you are trying to achieve, then you can establish the message and structure your conversation or presentation accordingly.

It is difficult to teach communication skills – you have to learn from experience. So as always, practice is essential, both to improve your skills generally and also to make the best of each individual presentation you make. To be effective you need to get over your embarrassment. Confidence is key to effective communications. Your audience will be able to tell if you are unsure and they may misread this and doubt your message. If you are unconfident it undermines your message. However, there is a fine line between this and arrogance which is a turn off, alienates your audience and undermines your mission. You have to respect your audience. If you don't, why should they respect you?

What you say to people should be concise, to the point and tell an interesting story.

In addition to the obvious things like content and visual aids, the following are just as important as the audience will be subconsciously taking them in:

- Your voice - how you say it is as important as what you say. You should also watch your volume and tone.
- Body language - your body movements express what your attitudes and thoughts really are.
- Appearance - first impressions influence people's attitudes to you. Dress appropriately for the occasion. What you wear should complement your message and not detract from it.

For a presentation:

Prepare what you are going to say carefully and logically, just as you would for a written report. Think about what the main points and the objectives of the talk are. Make a list of these two things as your starting point.

If you are making a presentation, write it out in rough. Review the draft. You will find things that are irrelevant or superfluous - delete them. Check the story is consistent and flows smoothly. If there are things you cannot easily express, possibly because of doubt about your understanding, it is better to leave them unsaid.

Try not to read from a script. Instead prepare cue cards which have key words and phrases on them. Blank postcards are ideal for this. Don't forget to number the cards in case you drop them.

Rehearse your presentation - to yourself at first and then in front of some friends or colleagues. You cannot rehearse enough, you have to practice all the time.

Audience participation is also a good way of gauging where the audience is. By asking them questions it ensures you know what they are thinking and allows you to adapt your presentation if necessary.

Play 'devil's advocate' with yourself. Think about possible objections to your own arguments and have responses ready. This is difficult, as it requires empathy with those who disagree with you. You can have the most fluent presentation in the world, but if you appear flummoxed by hostile questions you will lose credibility.

Never pretend to know everything, it isn't credible and you lose respect. Being honest when you don't know something or are unsure gets the audience on side. It creates a sense of trust which means when you do know something, even when it contradicts what they think- they will listen to you.

Greet the audience (for example, 'Good morning, ladies and gentlemen'), and tell them who you are. Good presentations then follow this formula:

- Tell the audience what you are going to be telling them
- Then tell them

- At the end reaffirm what you have told them.

Keep to the time allowed. If you can, keep it short. It's better to under-run than over-run.

Speak clearly. Don't shout or whisper - judge the acoustics of the room.

Don't rush, or talk deliberately slowly. Be natural.

Deliberately pause at key points - this has the effect of emphasising the importance of a particular point you are making.

Avoid jokes - always disastrous unless you are a natural expert.

To make a presentation interesting, change your delivery, but not too obviously, e.g.:

- speed
- pitch of voice

Use your hands to emphasize points but don't indulge in too much hand waving.

People can, over time, develop irritating habits. Ask colleagues occasionally what they think of your style.

Look at the audience as much as possible, but don't fix on an individual - it can be intimidating. Pitch your presentation towards the back of the audience, especially in larger rooms.

Avoid moving about too much. Pacing up and down can unnerve the audience, although some animation is desirable.

Keep an eye on the audience's body language. Know when to stop and also when to cut out a piece of a presentation.

The importance of constant communication

Don't forget the 80/20 rule! For every 20% of "doing" in a campaign, you need 80% of communicating what you are doing. This is because it takes constant repetition before a message sinks in. That's why top politicians constantly repeat quite simple sound bites: they have to say the same thing dozens of times before it registers in the consciousness of their target audience. As frustrating as it may seem, if you think you have communicated your messages enough, think again. Don't presume people know what your messages are already: check.

Personal communication is essential

The more personal the way in which you communicate with someone, the more successful it will be.

Sending people emails is not enough – you need to follow-up emails with phone calls or meetings.

A hand-written letter carries a lot more weight than an email.

Dos and Don'ts in a Crisis

The nature of the Middle East means that we often have to speak up for Israel because there is a crisis it is involved in.

In a crisis – DON'T:

- Panic
- Lose your temper
- Shout – it alienates people
- Write or call without checking your facts first
- Presume people know things – most people in the UK don't follow the detail of events in the Middle East and presumptions of knowledge can alienate people who are ill-informed but not hostile

In a crisis – DO:

- Look at We Believe In Israel's email updates for the latest facts about the situation and the key arguments
- Forward the We Believe In Israel email updates to your contacts
- Check for further info on the We Believe In Israel and BICOM website
- Make sure your local MP knows where you stand by writing to them and attending their surgery
- Write to newspapers arguing Israel's side of the story (including your local newspaper if it carries letters about non-local issues)
- Take part in radio phone-ins
- Comment on blogs, or write a blog post if you have a blog
- State your views on Twitter, Facebook and other social media
- Stay calm – rational argument trumps emotional outbursts
- Show respect for other viewpoints however annoying they may be
- Remember that if you are not telling someone the facts, it may be that no one else is
- Remember that the better the relationship you have built up with people before a crisis, the better chance they will listen to what you are saying during a crisis. Similarly it is very difficult to suddenly start communicating with people during a crisis who you haven't cultivated before
- Finally, remember your friends and family- don't presume others are talking to people. The most important thing you can do is talk to people locally. Don't shy away from conversations but make it easy for people to approach you and ask questions.

Letter Writing

Letters to the editor are an easy, quick way to share your opinions. It's something any member of the public with a spare 15 minutes can do. A letter should remain short, focused, and only have one central point. You should also address a specific article, editorial, or op-ed in the newspaper and it is important to send the letter in by email as quickly as possible (preferably the same day the article appears in the newspaper). Each specific newspaper will have its own regulations, which you can usually find on their website, but you should expect to write a letter that is about 150 words long and to include your contact information for verification purposes.

Here are some quick tips:

- Keep it short and to the point
- Address a specific article, editorial, or op-ed
- Write and send the letter ASAP
- Follow the newspaper's specific letter to the editor regulations
- Letters from members of the public are more powerful than from those already known to have a political agenda
- Keep coming back when opponents pen a reply (readers love to follow a letters battle and expect a written challenge to be answered)
- If you are writing to someone you know you need to personalize the letter. The more you make it specific to the individual the more likely you are to get the person you are writing to to engage and respond.
- Don't presume that people know things

Dealing with the media

We don't expect every supporter of Israel to engage with the media. If you don't feel confident doing it, it is better to pass off the opportunity to spokespeople who are experienced in media relations.

But if you do get the opportunity to appear in the media, here are some useful tips:

Interviews

When doing media interviews:

Prior to the interview

- Think about what you are trying to communicate
- Find out as much as you can about the journalist and their views and interests
- Ask about the format of the interview: how many questions, how long, live or pre-recorded. Ask for a set of questions in advance.
- Make sure you prepare your message and stick to it (repeat it several times!).
- At all times remember the audience and not the interviewer. You are in someone's living room or kitchen- you need to talk as you would when a guest in someone else's home.

When asked uncomfortable questions

- Try and get some facts and figures to back up your messages.
- Just state the facts
- Facts and figures must be relevant
- Never lose your temper, always remain calm

Make sure you are

- Prepared
- Clear
- Convincing
- Credible
- Focused

Forms of evidence/support

- Personal experience stories are very effective
- Use third party endorsements to enhance your credibility – have a list of supporters/quotes ready if you can
- Don't use jargon – Keep it simple!

Deliver sound bites first

- Decide on two or three key messages.
- Make the strongest point first
- Then support it...
- Best way to cope with a journalist is to...
 - Sound bite
 - Support points
 - Repeat sound bite

Flagging Key messages

Do say:

- The most important point is...
- The big picture here is...
- One thing to remember is...
- Let's put things into perspective...
- Use "First let me address your question on..."

Don't say:

- As I've already said
- As I said earlier

Rules of engagement

Dos

- Prepare
- Take control but also listen and acknowledge
- Set key messages
- Keep repeating them

Don'ts

- Let your guard down
- Lose your temper
- Hope you can "wing it"
- Attack Israel's critics

Remember the three Cs!

1. Control
2. Credibility
3. Confidence

Telephone interviews

- Prepare and know your talking points.
- Cross off your key points as you go.
- Stand up.
- Never forget you're in an interview.

Off the record

- A journalist is never off duty and neither are you
- Remember the journalist always has his own need for a good story in mind when he is asking you questions. So if you do not want to see it in print - do not say it.

Photos and Press Releases

You might want to get coverage in a local newspaper for your campaign activities.

A press release has far more chance of getting coverage if there is a photo opportunity, or a good quality photo you can supply, too.

- Use visual props that people will associate with your campaign.
- Phone the newspaper's photographer and discuss with them what would make a great picture.
- Press releases need to include:
 - An embargo/release date if relevant
 - The basics of the story: what is happening, where and when, and who is involved
 - A quote from a named spokesperson
 - Your contact details for further inquiries
- After sending press releases call up the journalists to discuss the campaign and how you can keep them informed about what you are doing.
- Chase up reporters after an event to check they'll be featuring your story.
- Remember that you need to keep to the production schedule of the local media if you want them to carry your stories. A copy deadline is sacrosanct and the media are rarely interested in week-old, 'stale' news stories.
- Even when you are dealing with an international issue like Israel you need to have a local link or example to capture the interest of the local media.
- Unusual news angles and photographs help to attract the interest of the media but do not be tempted into doing anything too 'zany' just to oblige a photographer or journalist. Inappropriate comments or photographs can come back 'to bite you' years later.

Remember, if you have cultivated a relationship you are far more likely to get stuff in the paper. Journalists are human beings doing a job and if you help them get good stories they will value you as a contact.

Basics of leaflets and direct mail

Leaflets are a good, cheap traditional way of getting your message direct to people in the street or in their homes, particularly if you are finding it tough to get media coverage.

The average leaflet has a lifespan of six seconds – the time it takes to carry what is assumed to be junk mail from the door to the waste bin.

- Any message in a leaflet needs to be summarised in a very big and eye-catching headline.
- Remember your target audience and use an appropriate style. A lively tabloid style with short punchy articles is far more likely to be read and remembered than dense worthy text.
- Black and white or two colour materials are cheaper to produce than full colour materials so it is always worth considering if a piece of printed material needs to be produced in colour.
- All printed materials involve significant print and production costs and it is important that they are targeted and delivered only to those people and areas that can justify the necessary expense
- Remember that printed materials take time to produce and distribute so a realistic production and distribution timetable is required for all printed materials and the question of topicality and continued relevance is a factor.

Leaflets should generally:

- Be easy to read
- Be illustrated with eye-catching pictures
- Not contain too many words
- Be well designed and laid out
- Look good visually – stand out from the crowd.
- Make the leaflets as locally specific as possible
- Seeing people they know in a photo creates interest and gets people to pay attention.

If you have a set of names and addresses, it is a lot better to send people enveloped letters (known as direct mail even if hand-delivered rather than posted) as they are more likely to read these than a leaflet. Even a letter addressed to “the resident” works better than a leaflet.

Top tips:

- Decide who the people are you want to write to.
- Who within these groups make up the target groups for your campaign?
- Decide what the message of your direct mail is.
- Decide on the tone of voice and what information to include.
- Write in the language style your target group will best respond to.
- Choose photos that will have meaning for your readers and are connected to the issues you are writing about
- Use clear and snappy headlines with local content to generate reader interest
- Tell people how they can get involved in the campaign.
- Include a method for people to respond to you (reply coupon, phone number, website and email address)
- Follow up on all responses and keep people informed about the progress of the campaign.
- Thank people for any support they give.

Basics of sending campaign emails

Emails are the quickest way of keeping your network of supporters up to date.

However, they often get deleted without being read, so need to be followed up with more personal contact.

- If you are keeping personal data such as email addresses, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioners' Office (http://www.ico.org.uk/for_organisations).
- You need to ensure you stick to the new GDPR regulations (<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>).
- Only add people to your email list if they have given explicit consent to receive emails (e.g. ticked a box opting-in, which says the kind of emails and is clear what organisation will send them).
- Always blind copy emails (i.e. put the addresses in the BCC line).
- Never share people's data with a third party unless they have given consent for this.
- Always give people the chance to opt out of receiving further emails.
- Collect people's email addresses when you are campaigning but always obtain specific consent to send them emails.
- If you have a very large email list you can manage it and send emails using a system like MailChimp (<http://www.mailchimp.com/>), which is free for up to 2,000 subscribers.
- Work with local community groups.
- Ask supporters to forward your emails to their friends and recommend joining your email list to friends and family.
- What do you know about the people you are emailing?
- Where did you get their email details from? Discuss the level of information you need to include in an initial email and then how you can follow this up.
- Even though you want the email to feel personal don't write more than is necessary. Get to the main point quickly, you don't need long introductions.
- Keep the paragraphs short in number and short in length.
- Sum up the main details of the campaign and what action you are going to take.
- Why have you sent this email? Be clear what it is you are asking people to do and why they should do.
- Think about who you are writing to. (Do you need to introduce yourself, the campaign and the key issues?)
- Adapt your style to suit your audience.
- Make the email feel personal. Even if you are writing to a group of people you want it to feel like you are communicating with an individual.
- What's the tone of the email? You don't want to be over-familiar, but email isn't as formal as a letter. Use your natural voice so people get a real sense of who you are.
- Set time aside to keep on top of the email responses you receive, and respond to them promptly. Be consistent with your tone of voice.
- How often do you need to update people on the progress of the campaign? How urgent is this issue for the audience – do you need to update them daily, weekly, monthly or just when something happens?

Using social media

Many people, particularly if they are younger, increasingly look online to get news and views and to network and debate. If you feel comfortable using social media, it is an important space for advocacy of Israel's case.

Blogs

The blogging community is among the most important audiences that we can reach out to. You should engage blogs at every opportunity from commenting on existing blog posts to creating original entries.

More important may be your ability to be our eyes and ears in the blogosphere and respond, even if it is only a few lines, in the comment section of the many blogs throughout the Internet. Just like you respond to scurrilous e-mails that are sent to your inbox, we encourage you to respond to your local blogs and other online community forums.

You may also wish to consider starting your own blog or having a personal blog on a major blog (many blogs and campaign sites allow this).

Here are some quick tips: Blog early and often. Blog comments can be as short as a couple of lines, while a full blog entry can be short or as long as a standard op-ed (700 words). Blog locally.

The two main platforms for creating a blog of your own are www.blogger.com and www.wordpress.com. Both are very easy to use and the sites talk you through setting up a blog step-by-step.

You can build readership for your own blog by:

- Commenting on other blogs and linking back to yours
- Promoting the link to your blog or to specific posts you have written in emails, on Twitter or on Facebook, and quoting your blog address in offline material such as letters to the press or leaflets
- Emailing writers of other blogs to draw their attention to your best posts

You can use Google blog search (<http://www.google.com/blogsearch>) to search for blogs that are talking about Israel or a specific issue, and use it to set up email monitoring alerts.

Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging site where you write pithy comments in less than 140 characters. It is a very democratic medium in that anyone can use it to interact directly with senior politicians and journalists.

It is easy to sign up here <https://twitter.com/>

Start by following the feed from people you expect to express views on Israel or by searching for Israel or related terms.

Argue with them if you disagree with them, or retweet their views if you like them.

We Believe in Israel's Twitter feed is: [@webelieveisrael](https://twitter.com/webelieveisrael)

BICOM's Twitter feed is: [@BritainIsrael](https://twitter.com/BritainIsrael)

Facebook

Facebook is a social-networking site. You can sign up here: <https://www.facebook.com/>

You can like our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/webelieveinIsrael/> for regular updates from us, including petitions you can share with you facebook friends.

Facebook can be used like Twitter to broadcast your views to your online “friends” or comment on views that they express.

It also has features enabling users to set up groups and events and support causes, which is a great way to organise Israel supporters online. Create a facebook group and add people who share your views, coordinate events, share articles to repost. People who may not know but have similar interests may want to get involved and join your group, welcome them and expand your circle of opinion-formers. A “page” is less interactive than a “group” – it is more for broadcasting to supporters, whereas in a “group” all members can post content.

Instagram

Instagram works in a similar way to Facebook but with two key differences – you can only post photos or videos, not plain text, and it only works on mobile devices. You download it as an app on your mobile phone or tablet.

Dealing with anti-Israel arguments

There are situations where it is essential to react directly to anti-Israel incidents and rhetoric. But you must do so with the utmost care. You have to determine what is malicious and what is ignorance and deal with them very differently. Also, you must at all times remember the audience that will be hearing or reading your response. Even if the individual is malicious you can still lose a bigger audience if you reply in the wrong way. Remember two wrongs do not make a right. Keep your cool. Be patient. Respond with accurate information in a succinct fashion to specific anti-Israel materials in the media. Remember, do not make it personal, i.e. about the person, as it annoys the audience, stick to the issue. In the media it is most effective to do so in the form of letters to the editor.

Be sure to frequently cite unbiased sources in your arguments; using only overtly pro-Israel sources invites criticism and allows readers to easily dismiss your arguments. Independent sources, no matter how irritating, are always more trusted. Also people who have no reason to support your argument or Israel are also good to quote. They are your unusual suspects, the opinion formers that people listen to when they talk, even if they aren't experts on the issue.

Research anti-Israel speakers or writers. Come prepared with pointed questions and to challenge inaccuracies.

When antisemitic materials and/or rhetoric appear, you should publicly condemn them. Keep in mind that not all anti-Israel material is antisemitic. When in doubt, contact Jewish organisations for guidance about when criticism of Israel becomes antisemitism.

Be careful with the language and rhetoric you use. It is easy to fall into arguments concerning "us" and "them" and to generalize about Muslims or Palestinians, when you are actually only referring to specific groups, political organisations, terrorist organisations, and so on. You should also be aware when talking to non Jewish audiences as you can presume too much knowledge and that leads to miscommunication and irritation in the audience. Other words to be careful of using are: "you" and "we". At all times you need to be clear about who and what you are referring to.

It is also important to differentiate between advocacy of a Palestinian state as part of a two-state solution, or concern for the welfare and rights of Palestinians; criticism of specific actions by Israel; and attempts to delegitimise Israel's right to exist as a state. You must not use ridicule or be shrill in responding as it will alienate those people who are undecided but not anti. Someone who is interested enough to ask questions is someone who you can reason with, but you must not make the mistake of presuming everyone is an enemy. People are on the whole just ignorant but not stupid. They need you to talk and gently educate them.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a complicated topic. In order to strategically respond to the anti-Israel campaign, you must educate yourself and your peers on the nuances of the issues. However, remember no one knows everything. To admit you don't know something actually gains the respect of your audience.

Making a Speech

Occasionally there may be opportunities to address a meeting about the case for Israel or even to go head-to-head with people who disagree.

Only agree to speak if you feel comfortable about it: otherwise try to get an experienced speaker from a national organisation.

Things to consider if invited to debate Israel:

- How many people will attend the event?
- What will their starting point be? Debates tend to attract people who already have strong views, so think carefully about how much time you commit to attending an event with an audience whose mind will be largely made up.
- Make sure you are up to date on the latest briefings on the BICOM website.
- Identify the key message that you want people to take away from the meeting, and make sure that you keep bringing the argument back to that message.
- Know your opponent. Think about what angle he or she is going to approach the debate from, and be ready with some rebuttal lines.
- Take some campaign literature with your contact details on it so that you have something to give to people who may wish to contact you.
- Prepare by writing an opening speech and rehearsing it to friends – time it as it is easy to overestimate how much you can say if there is a time limit.
- Keep it simple
- React to the audience not to the others on the panel
- Keep calm
- Do not ridicule or attack someone personally as it annoys the audience.
- Smile. People respond to positive body language. It also communicates quiet confidence.

Section 3

“How to” Guides – Local organising

Setting up a local campaign group

If you are ready and know some other local supporters of Israel you might want to think about setting up a local campaign group. This is how to do it:

- You should create a list of local supporters of Israel with whom you should regularly communicate. Make sure that all events are clearly posted with location, purpose and start and finish times. Email is the easiest form of communication but don't overdo it. Don't send more than one email a week, and preferably send it at the same time each week. For supporters who are not on email, have a monthly mail out or a phone tree to keep them in touch.
- Meet together monthly or quarterly to agree future actions and who is responsible for them.
- It's a good idea to have one person who is locally responsible for recruiting and organising volunteers, but they shouldn't be the only person to do this work.
- Every activity must have someone who is responsible for it. When planning a grid of activities include the name of who will organise the meeting, the street stall or the letter-writing session. Undertaking a survey of supporters will identify their skills and interests.
- Investing in training of supporters who want to help in organising activities will mean that the weight of the tasks will be spread amongst more volunteers.
- Plan a range of campaign events on a grid for the year ahead. Some people like street stalls because they like talking to the public whilst others will prefer stuffing envelopes over a cup of tea. Make sure supporters have a range of options.
- You need to make sure people know about all your events at least three weeks in advance.
- Supplement bulletins by talking to supporters directly. Experience shows that the only real way to get people to help you is to ask them personally, either on the doorstep or on the phone.
- Some people may have a specific reason for not helping out – perhaps they are having a busy time at work. No does not mean never. If people say no during a phone around, they should still be called next time you are working through the list unless they have given a reason to excuse themselves permanently.
- When speaking to supporters you need to have a robust system for collecting information about what they are willing to do. You should also keep a record of when you spoke to them last and what was agreed.
- Make it personal.
- Remember not everyone is as committed as you so ensure there is plenty of fun in what you do. People get involved to be in a social group, as well as to work on an issue they care about.

Organising a local meeting

House Meetings

House Meetings have been used, predominantly in America, as a way to build up small campaigning groups within a community.

Holding the event in a local home will make the event seem very personal and will demonstrate that you are reaching out to engage with the people you are inviting. Find out if a local supporter is happy to have you hold the event in their kitchen or living room. Alternatively, a local hotspot like a cafe or a community venue provide neutral and familiar territory.

Top Tips

- welcome everyone and be friendly
- have an agenda and don't let the meeting over-run
- make sure you have a supporter there ready to help you encourage discussion
- be ready with a series of questions or topics to discuss so that the conversation doesn't dry up
- have a sign-in sheet ready to record names and contact details of people who have attended, especially email addresses, so you can follow up anything they raise.
- make notes of issues that people are interested in so that you can send them relevant updates after the event
- think about the place you are holding the meeting – have refreshments available to keep people comfortable, arrange seating in a non-intimidating way, and remember this is an informal discussion group

Supporter Mobilisation Meetings

You should aim to have events that are specifically about involving known supporters of Israel in pro-Israel campaign activity.

The event must be:

- attractive so that people come
- social so that people bond and become part of the team
- purposeful

Every event that you do must have a clear campaigning purpose.

Ideas that work for getting people to come to a supporter mobilisation event include:

- beginning with a good speaker
- showing an interesting film
- selecting an unusual venue for an event so that people might want to see inside the building.

If possible try to avoid having an entry price so there is no barrier to people coming.

Make sure you get the name and contact details of everyone who attends.

Invest in food and drink and organising the event so people can mix. Name tags help new people meet each other. Once people bond and feel part of the team they are more likely to come to your subsequent events.

Attach an activity to the event with a key campaign purpose. Get a speaker to give a short speech saying why we need to be doing the activity that is the focus of the event, e.g. everyone going away and writing to their MP.

Organising a Street Stall

You might want to get attention for your campaigning and promote Israel's case with a stall at a community event, or even a public stall on a local high street.

Things to consider:

- What specific aspects of the case for Israel will you be talking to people about?
- Where and when will it be best to have a stall?
- Do you need permission?
- What will your stall comprise of?
- How many and which volunteers will you need to help you?

Make sure you are hosting your stall at the busiest time and location possible. If it is a public site rather than at an event, go and visit it the week before. Decide where you will pitch your stall so you are visible, but not obstructing the pavement or flow of people.

For a street stall, make sure you have permission to hold it there. It is courteous to contact the head of the environment department at the council and let them know that you will be holding a number of street stalls locally. Make sure you stress that you will not obstruct pavements or the flow of people. Shopping centres and supermarkets are also ideal locations. However, you will need specific permission each time you host a street stall inside them. Please also be aware you will need permission to be on bus or train station property. However, you can be nearby to contact commuters. You will not be allowed to hold a street stall on private property unless you have the owner's permission.

You will need:

- Pasting table or similar.
- Posters, signs, banners.
- Clipboards, petition and signup sheets.
- Leaflets.
- Stickers.
- Sellotape, scissors, string.
- About four volunteers for the duration of the stall. Ask volunteers if they will help for an hour and give them an allotted time.

Top tips:

- Smile and look welcoming.
- Invite everyone to sign your petition, pledge support, or whatever your call to action is. Encourage them to include their mobile number or email address, as well as, their postal address details. Any form that collects personal data in this way needs a disclaimer on it authorising you to use the data to re-contact people.
- Don't stand behind the stall or table. Be proactive and approach people and talk to them.
- Don't crowd the stall. Your team should be dispersed, talking to as many people as possible.
- Try not to let your volunteers just talk to each other; people are less likely to come up to them.

Section 4

“How to” Guides – Influencing other organisations

Communicating with other faith groups

The priority for pro-Israel campaigners in engaging with faith groups should be to build on personal relationships that you already have with people of other faiths. There is no point duplicating existing groups and mechanisms for interfaith dialogue: do your research and speak to local Rabbis and other community leaders to find out what mechanisms for engaging with other faiths already exist in your area.

Faith leaders and members of faith groups often have a multiplying effect, in the sense that they can spread positive messages to wide networks easily. The scale and regularity of faith group networks, through services, house groups and community meetings, means that engaging with one group can often lead to a whole network being opened up to you.

Engaging on a personal level with group leaders will be of immense importance. It will be helpful to attend these meetings with a Rabbi who already has dialogue with their counterparts from other faiths, a friendly supporter from the congregation or a national organisation such as Christian Friends of Israel.

In conjunction with the relevant group leaders, organise an event with the wider faith community. This can be a meeting at the place of worship, a house meeting or listening panel, or a coffee morning, depending on what local faith group leaders think is appropriate. This meeting must be strongly based on the premise of building long-term dialogue.

House Meeting formats are already a well established part of many faith groups and practices. For example for a large number of the “new” churches, weekly house meetings are as important as the main Sunday gathering. House meetings give the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with a small number of people. This dynamic can be used incredibly well if the discussion based nature of the groups is used to best effect.

Approach meetings from the perspective that you are engaging in a listening exercise to learn, or gain a greater understanding of the concerns of the particular faith community that you are meeting regarding Israel.

First contact is all-important. If faith groups are of the persuasion to engage in the issue of Israel, it will usually be from the point of view that they have something to offer rather than something to learn. Stressing that any meeting will be part of a long-term dialogue is vital.

Do your research and tailor your approach to the individual faith group you are meeting. When speaking to individual groups, using the word “faith” instead of “Christianity” or “Islam” often plays badly, as there is a perception that you are “watering down” deeply held beliefs. Don’t be afraid to use religious language.

Christian Friends of Israel UK can be contacted via their website:

<http://www.cfi.org.uk/contactus.php>

Joining a political party

If you support a particular political party, joining it gives you a voice in its internal structures and the opportunity to influence its stance on Israel.

All the major political parties can be joined online:

Conservative Party

<https://www.conservatives.com/join>

- £25 standard rate
- £5 Youth (under 23)

Labour Party

<https://join.labour.org.uk/>

- £50 Standard rate
- £25 Reduced rate (unwaged and pensioners)
- £3 Youth (14-19 or in full-time education)

The Labour Party has a specifically Zionist affiliated organisation, the Jewish Labour Movement (the successor to Poale Zion). Membership details are here:

<http://www.jlm.org.uk/membership>

Liberal Democrats

<https://libdems.secure.force.com/LiberalDemocrats/NewMemberRegistration>

- £12 Standard rate

Just like most membership organisations they are more readily influenced from the inside.

If you really want to affect policy one of the best ways is joining a political party. However, it isn't for everyone so do not join unless you support that particular party.

Joining a trade union

As democratic, member-run organisations, unions can and do take stances on international issues, including Israel.

To find the right union for you and your job, you can call the TUC's 'Join a Union' line 0870 600 4 882 (national rate, 8am - 9pm Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm Saturday) or use workSMART's online tools to help you choose.

There is a list of all trade unions affiliated to the TUC online here: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/join-union> this includes a brief description of which occupations they recruit from.

Some professions e.g. teaching, journalism, have specialist unions that only represent that profession.

If your occupation does not have a specific union, the largest unions will usually have a general section that would be happy to recruit you.

These are:

Unite

<http://www.unitetheunion.org/>

(recruits in manufacturing, engineering, energy, construction, IT, defence aerospace, motor industry, civil aviation, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, steel and metals, shipbuilding, scientists, technologists, professional and managerial staff, electronics and telecommunications, tobacco, food and drink, textiles, ceramics, paper, printing, professional staff in universities, commercial sales, the voluntary sector, banking and financial services, and the National Health Service, administrative, clerical, technical and supervisory; agriculture; building, construction and civil engineering; chemical, oil and rubber manufacture; civil air transport; docks and waterways; food, drink and tobacco; general workers; passenger services; power and engineering; public services; road transport commercial; textiles; vehicle building and automotive)

Unison

<http://www.unison.org.uk/>

(recruits in local government, health care, the water, gas and electricity industries, further and higher education, schools, transport, voluntary sector, housing associations, police support staff)

GMB

<http://www.gmb.org.uk/>

(recruits in public services - primarily NHS, local government, care education; also engineering, construction, shipbuilding, energy, catering, security, civil air transport, aerospace, defence, clothing, textiles, retail, hotel, chemicals, utilities, offshore, food production and distribution)

Trade Unions are membership organisations and are best influenced from the inside. They are a very closed community and do not react well to people or groups from outside telling them to do things. However, individual union members may be very different.

You will be surprised by how many ordinary trade union members locally are not aware of their National Union's policy. Do not presume that just because someone is a member they are active or aware or agree. They are very receptive to people reaching out and befriending them- being interested in what they think.

It is only by joining and building relationships that we can challenge the presumption that ordinary union members are anti-Israel.

Britain Israel Trade Union Dialogue (BITUD) was established to promote solidarity and strong links between British, Israeli and Palestinian trade unions: <https://www.bitud.org.uk/>

Organising on Campus

The Union of Jewish Students' (UJS) mission is: 'To create meaningful Jewish campus experiences and inspire Jewish students to make an enduring commitment to their Jewish identity, Israel and the community.'

UJS serves as the sole communal body representing all Jewish students to the Jewish and wider community. As a Union directed by its members, UJS' priority is to meet the needs and demands of its members both individually and through Jewish Societies (J-Soc).

Its primary focus is over fifty J-Socs throughout the UK. UJS offers each J-Soc the expertise, guidance and resources to enrich Jewish student life on campus.

UJS can be contacted here: https://www.ujs.org.uk/contact_us

Section 5

Fact Sheets

Fact Sheet: Jewishness, Zionism & Racism

Zionism is the national movement of the Jewish people, calling for sovereign Jewish life in the land of Israel. The origin of the word 'Zionism' is the biblical word 'Zion', often used as a synonym for Jerusalem and the land of Israel.

Historically, Zionism as a political movement emerged as part of the growth of national movements in the last quarter of the 19th century. Jews aspired to establish an independent and sovereign entity in the land of their ancestors. Zionist leaders, most notably the Hungarian-born Theodor Herzl, hoped that the fulfilment of such aspirations would end centuries of anti-Jewish persecution and allow for the renewal of Jewish culture, language and traditions.

The persecution of Jews was a constant of European life in the medieval period. Jews were demonised as the killers of Christ, banned from most professions, frequently confined to ghettos, periodically subjected to pogroms and expelled from one country after another. Many Jews hoped the onset of modernity, which led to emancipation for Jews in many countries, would bring about an end to anti-Jewish prejudice in Europe. However, in the modern period anti-Semitism did not disappear. It took on new forms, such as the belief that Jews were racially inferior, or involved in a global conspiracy. Jews in Europe were subject to waves of pogroms and persecution in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Herzl himself was driven to found the Zionist movement after witnessing anti-Semitism in France. In a famous case in 1894, a Jewish captain in the French army, Alfred Dreyfus, was falsely convicted of treason. Dreyfus was publicly disgraced at a ceremony in Paris, where crowds of onlookers chanted 'Death to the Jews'. Only later was he acquitted.

Herzl was the first to bring the Jewish need for an independent sovereign state to world attention. He turned the historical Jewish dream of returning to Israel into a modern political movement. He convened the first World Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897. As a democratic movement from its inception, the broad umbrella of Zionism always included secular and religious Jews (early Zionism was predominantly secular), as well as those subscribing to political views from across the spectrum. Threads of the wide range of views within Zionism can still be seen today in the complex party political structure in the State of Israel.

The establishment of the State of Israel marked the realisation of Zionism's central political goal of attaining an internationally recognised, legally secured home for the Jewish people in their historical homeland, where Jews would be free from persecution and able to develop their national identity. Zionism retains its relevance today as the Jewish state still seeks to build a home for the Jewish people that is at peace with its neighbours and able to fulfil its potential as a cultural and spiritual beacon for the Jewish people. Most Jews around the world consider themselves supporters of Zionism, in that they support the existence and development of Israel as the state and homeland for the Jewish people.

At various times, certain groups have tried to delegitimise Zionism by falsely smearing it as a racist ideology, or inaccurately characterising it as a colonial movement. One of the premises of Zionism is the belief that the Jewish people, who have a shared language, culture, history and historical homeland, constitute a nation. As such, they have equal rights to other nations, including the right to self-determination. To describe Zionism as racist is to discriminate against Jews by uniquely denying their rights to national self-determination.

Zionists sought to end the status of Jews as a persecuted minority, by re-establishing a majority in Palestine through immigration, settlement and peaceful agreement with the local Arabs. Most of the Jews who moved to Palestine prior to the establishment of the State of Israel came not as colonisers, but as refugees fleeing persecution in various parts of Europe. They did not seek to subjugate the local population, but hoped that the lives of all the residents of the area would be improved by the influx of Jewish immigrants. The early Zionists believed that there was ample room in Palestine to support Jewish immigration, without compromising the interests of the local Arab population. The area was a relatively small and underdeveloped part of the Ottoman Empire, with no independent government or unified political structure. Jews did not enter Palestine by force, but as legal immigrants, who purchased land and built new communities.

Mainstream Zionists always believed that a non-Jewish minority would live alongside the Jewish people as citizens with full and equal rights. This principle was enshrined in Israel's Declaration of Independence, which promised Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel 'full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.' Today that vision is expressed in Israel. Non-Jewish residents of the State of Israel have Israeli citizenship by right and approximately 20% of the citizens of Israel are Arabs and other minorities. The spouses and children of Israeli citizens, whatever their faith, are also entitled to citizenship.

In order to fulfil its goal of being a homeland and refuge for the Jewish people, Israel grants citizenship to any Jew who wishes to live in Israel. This right is extended to the children and grandchildren of Jews and their spouses, even if they themselves are not Jewish. It is also possible to become a citizen of Israel through naturalisation in some cases.

Fact Sheet: Iran

Iran, which is a Persian speaking, Shi'ite Muslim country, has been led by a radical and fundamentalist Islamic leadership since 1979. The regime subscribes to a theocratic ideology that is fiercely anti-Western and opposed to the very existence of a Jewish state in the region.

Iran is a country with ten times Israel's population, nearly 80 times Israel's size, and 10% of the world's oil. It aims to be the strongest power in the region and to export its radical ideology throughout the world. Iran's leaders frequently call for the eradication of the State of Israel and have promoted antisemitism including denial of the Holocaust.

Destabilising the region

Iran's ambitions are not only of concern to Israel. Iran opposes internationally-backed efforts to bring stability across the region, by supporting violent anti-Western forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon. The British government has linked Iran to attacks on its troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and its sailors were abducted and taken to Iran from international waters in 2007. Iran's missile programme has developed long-range weapons that can reach many parts of Europe.

Iran views terrorism as a legitimate means to further its ideological and strategic aims. Iran opposes any Arab peace agreements or recognition of Israel and assists Islamist terrorist groups and organisations that strive to attack Israel, sabotage the peace process and destabilise the regimes of the more pragmatic Arab countries. The Iranian regime arms, funds and provides military training to the Lebanese Shi'ite terrorist organisation Hezbollah, which shares its ideology and acts in coordination with the Iranian government. Iran supplied Hezbollah with the missiles and rockets that hit major cities and towns in the north of Israel in the Second Lebanon War of 2006, killing and injuring hundreds of Israelis. Iran supports Palestinian terrorist organisations such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. It provided them with military and financial assistance in their violent activity against Israel. Iran also has a close strategic relationship with Syria, and is currently supporting the Assad regime's murderous war against rebel groups.

Iran's nuclear programme

The danger posed by Iran to stability in the region threatens to be greatly enhanced by its rapid development of nuclear weapons technology. Iran claims that its nuclear programme is purely for civilian purposes, but in 2003, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which monitors nuclear programmes on behalf of the UN, discovered that Iran had been systematically lying about the true extent of its programme for many years. In 2009 it was revealed that Iran had continued to deceive the world, when a secret uranium enrichment facility was exposed in Qom by Western intelligence agencies. The threat that Iran might use a nuclear weapon, or pass on the technology to one of its terrorist clients, would make it much harder to counter Iran's malign influence in the region.

The nuclear programme and Iran's regional activities are interconnected. Whilst the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear agreement between the Western countries and Iran covered only the nuclear programme, the legitimacy and funding it provided Iran have emboldened Tehran to carry out more malign activities in the region in a bid to position itself as the dominant actor in the heart of the Middle East – in Mesopotamia and the Levant – on the ruins of the Arab Spring and ISIS. And while the build-up of Iran's non-conventional military capabilities and its expanding zone of influence from Iran to the Mediterranean were designed, inter alia, to provide a shield to the nuclear programme, the nuclear programme was designed to ultimately provide an umbrella for Iran's hegemonic ambitions and power projection in the region.

The US decision to exit the JCPOA ushers us into a new chapter. However, it will take time for this chapter to unfold before we can sense its precise direction and full impact. Right now, none of the involved parties, first and foremost Iran, is inclined to rush to extreme action in response to the US decision.

Fact Sheet: Hamas

Hamas is a radical Islamist organisation that emerged from the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood during the early stages of the First Intifada. Its charter was issued in 1988, setting out the goals and vision of the organisation. It includes a firm and explicit rejection of the very idea of a peace process, which would involve the surrender of 'Islamic land' and the recognition of Israel's right to exist on it. The central aim of Hamas is to establish an Islamic state in all territory defined as 'Palestine' (from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River) through armed struggle. Hamas is fiercely antisemitic and its charter blames Jews for all kinds of evils, including the First and Second World Wars. The charter looks forward to a day of judgement which will only come when Muslims kill the Jews.

Hamas has become a leading perpetrator of terrorist attacks against Israel, as well as against suspected Palestinian 'collaborators' and Fatah rivals. Hamas has carried out suicide bombings and attacks against Israel since the early 1990s. In recent years, its principal method of violence has been the firing of mortars and rockets at Israeli towns close to the Gaza border, and attempts to build attack tunnels under the border. Hamas's military wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, has been proscribed under the UK's Terrorism Act 2000 since February 2001. The organisation is also outlawed in its entirety by the EU and US.

Hamas was responsible for the kidnapping of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who was taken from inside Israel in a cross-border raid in June 2006, and finally released in October 2011 (in exchange for 1,027 Palestinian prisoners, including some convicted of multiple murders and carrying out terror attacks against Israeli civilians).

The Quartet - the EU, US, Russia and the UN - demands that Hamas renounces violence, acknowledges Israel's right to exist and recognises previous agreements between Israel and the PA. Hamas has refused these demands. These are not arbitrary principles. They are equivalent to the commitments made by the PLO at the beginning of the Oslo peace process in the 1990s. They are the logical premise for moving towards a peaceful two-state solution. The Israeli government has repeatedly and explicitly recognised the national rights of the Palestinian people and their right to their own sovereign state. Hamas is expected to equally recognise Israel's right to exist.

Hamas leaders occasionally talk of a long-term 'hudna' (temporary ceasefire) with Israel. However, they have never given any sign that they are ready to accommodate the existence of Israel as part of a permanent solution to the conflict.

Fact Sheet: Security

After the failure of the Camp David negotiations in 2000, the Second Intifada broke out and brought with it a wave of suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks to Israel. Whilst Israel has experienced terrorism throughout its history, it had never been so intense. In 2002, a fatal suicide bombing was carried out in Israel nearly every two weeks. The attackers invariably came from the West Bank. In response, Israel decided to build a security barrier in order to stop terrorists from entering Israel from the West Bank. This contributed to a dramatic reduction in successful terrorist attacks inside Israel. All but 5% of the barrier is an electronically monitored fence and the rest is a wall.

The purpose of the security barrier is to prevent attacks on Israeli citizens. Whilst the final border between Israel and the Palestinians has to be resolved by negotiations, the route of the security barrier is determined by the need to save Israeli lives by preventing Palestinian terrorists from reaching Israeli towns and cities. In 2004, the Israeli Supreme Court made a landmark ruling, which concluded the fence was legal, on the strict grounds that its purpose was to protect lives. The court determined that the route should not cause disproportionate harm to the lives of Palestinians in the West Bank. On the basis of this ruling, the route of the fence was changed in many places to minimise the impact on Palestinian life. The revised route follows the route of the Green Line (the 1949 armistice line) in many areas and includes less than 10% of the West Bank territory.

Palestinians living in the West Bank are able to appeal to the Israeli Supreme Court against the route of the fence where it causes disruption to their lives, and have successfully done so in some cases. Attempts are made to minimise disruption caused by the fence, for example by building agricultural gates which allow Palestinian farmers to access their land.

Fact Sheet: The IDF

Is it accountable and does it act without regard for international law?

Israel has been drawn into conflicts with irregular forces in urban environments. In recent operations in the Gaza Strip and in southern Lebanon, Israel has acted primarily to prevent the firing of rockets at its towns and cities. As with British and American forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, Israel faces complex problems in fighting against forces which deliberately hide among the civilian population.

The IDF considers itself bound by international humanitarian law and makes use of all available measures to distinguish combatants from non-combatants and to act with proportionality. Its soldiers are required to act according to its ethical code, known as 'The Spirit of the IDF'. This code includes the principle of the 'Purity of Arms', according to which forces are expected to do all they can to prevent harm to non-combatants. This task is deliberately made difficult by the tactics of the militant groups Israel is confronting. Both Hamas in Gaza, and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, deliberately embed themselves within civilian populations in order to make it harder for Israel to act against them.

During Operation Cast Lead, Israel's military operation to stop rocket fire from Gaza at the beginning of 2009, Hamas fighters used the civilian population as cover. They fired rockets at Israel from civilian areas, established bases and weapons stores in mosques, apartment buildings and hospitals, and booby-trapped civilian neighbourhoods. Fighters removed their uniforms to make it impossible for the Israeli forces to distinguish combatants and non-combatants.

Israel used a range of techniques to try and overcome these challenges. These included issuing widespread warnings to civilians with leaflet drops, and telephoning residents of individual buildings to warn them that they were going to be targeted. Over 1,000 Palestinians were killed in the operation. NGOs have claimed that the majority of those killed were civilians. Israel has compiled a list of fatalities indicating that fewer than a third were civilians. Israel maintains that most were operatives in Hamas's military and security system.

After the operation the Israeli military launched a number of investigations to examine lessons that could be learned to further reduce the harm to civilians. These included better coordination with humanitarian agencies and better control over the use of weapons which caused harm to civilians, such as white phosphorous. In July 2010 Israel announced that to better ensure its own compliance with its humanitarian responsibilities, a humanitarian officer would be introduced to combat units at battalion level.

Israel has declared that it is committed to investigating all credible allegations of misconduct against its armed forces, whether they come from Palestinian sources, the media or NGOs. Responsibility for IDF investigations falls to the Military Advocate General (MAG), a legal officer with the rank of Major General who heads an independent legal branch within the IDF. The Military Advocate General is appointed directly by the Defence Minister and is outside the IDF command structure. He determines whether a case warrants a full criminal investigation.

The decisions of the Military Advocate General are subject to review by Israel's civilian Attorney General, who is also an independent figure. A complainant or non-governmental organisation may trigger a review by the Attorney General by simply sending a letter directly to the Attorney General. The decisions of both the Military Advocate General and the Attorney General are subject to judicial review by Israel's Supreme Court, which can be petitioned by any interested party including Israelis and Palestinians alike, and NGOs. One hundred and fifty allegations were investigated following Operation Cast Lead. These have resulted in disciplinary and criminal proceedings against IDF soldiers and officers in some cases.

Israel also has a strong legacy of independent judicial and state inquiries into the conduct of military and political leaders in times of conflict. In two recent examples, major inquiries were led by former Supreme Court judges into the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and the Gaza flotilla incident in 2010 in which nine Turkish activists were killed.

Fact Sheet: BDS

A boycott would do nothing to contribute to the advancement of a peaceful and just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Far from helping the Palestinians, a boycott would hinder the development of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians on which prospects for future peace and security rely. The goal of peace depends on two sides, Israelis and Palestinians, working together with international support towards the mutual goal of a negotiated two-state solution. An environment of rejection and misdirected pressure targeted at Israel is counterproductive to an internationally-backed peace process premised on the development of mutual understanding and respect for both sides.

An academic and cultural boycott, which has been promoted by various trade unions and other activists, contradicts the principles of scientific ethics and the open spirit of international cooperation between scientists, artists and others. It is particularly counterproductive to target Israel's academic community, which has a proud record of promoting honest debate, criticism and self-examination within Israeli society. Israel's universities have a significant Arab student intake and are important forums for interaction and cooperation between Jews and Arabs. Arab citizens of Israel have increasingly risen to high ranks within Israeli academia.

Whereas Israel, an open and democratic state in which Jewish and Arab citizens enjoy equal rights, and which embraces free academic inquiry, has been threatened with a boycott, no other country is subject to such a campaign. Prominent Palestinian academics such as Sari Nusseibeh, President of Al Quds University in East Jerusalem, have been firm critics of the movement to boycott Israeli universities and academics.

Similarly, an economic boycott cannot help the Palestinian people, whose future prosperity depends on creating an atmosphere of economic and political cooperation. Since Israel's establishment, the Arab world has tried to use an economic boycott to isolate and weaken Israel economically, and thus make the state non-viable. Whilst Egypt and Jordan have direct trade links with Israel, most Arab states are reluctant to trade directly with Israel. The Roadmap peace plan specifically calls for the normalisation of relations between the Arab states and Israel, including the return of trade links.

Fact Sheet: History

The land of Israel has always been integral to Jewish religious, cultural and national life and remains so to this day. In the Jewish tradition, the land of Israel is central to the covenantal relationship between the Children of Israel and God. The Five Books of Moses, known to Jews as the Torah, tells how the 12 tribes of Israel, the precursors to the Jewish people, entered the land having been freed from slavery in Egypt. The first unified Israelite kingdom was founded under the rule of King Saul, around 1000 BCE. His successor David established Jerusalem as his capital. There, David's son Solomon built the First Jewish Temple as the centre of Jewish religious life. The First Temple stood until 586 BCE, when it was destroyed by the Babylonians. The Second Temple was consecrated on the same spot in 520 BCE, and stood at the centre of Jewish life and worship until it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.

The destruction of both the First and Second Temples were catastrophic events in Jewish history, in which thousands of Jews were killed and exiled, and which led to the existence of Jewish communities around the world. But even after the destruction of the Second Temple, there was a continuous presence of Jews in Israel. Throughout the centuries, major Jewish cultural achievements were made by Jews who lived there. These include the compilation of the Jerusalem Talmud, dating to the 4th century, and the establishment of Tzfat as a centre for the development of the Jewish mystical tradition in the 16th century.

Jews around the world made remembering the Temple in Jerusalem and the hope for an eventual return to the land of Israel - also referred to as 'Zion' - central to all aspects of their religious worship and liturgy. Jewish prayers are always conducted facing towards Jerusalem. For most Jews through the ages, travelling to Israel was an impossible dream. In their prayers, traditions, poetry and scriptures, Jews from around the world expressed their yearning and longing to return

Since the end of the 19th century, Jews have come from all parts of the world to live in Israel. Jews use the Hebrew word 'aliya', which means 'going up', to refer to the act of moving to Israel. Whilst most Jews in Israel were either massacred or dispersed following the failed Bar Kochba revolt against the Romans in the Second Century, Jews continued to live in the area in smaller numbers. In 1880, the overall population in the area was approximately 570,000. The Jewish population of Palestine was then around 10,000. Most lived in Jerusalem where there was a Jewish majority, with smaller communities in Tzfat, Tiberias and Jaffa.

The first significant movements for Jewish settlement in Palestine came in response to an upsurge in anti-Jewish violence in Russia (the pogroms) following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881. This so-called 'First Aliya' saw the Jewish population of Palestine swell to approximately 25,000 by 1903, with many of the immigrants establishing new agricultural communities.

The Zionist movement gathered momentum among the Jews of Europe in the early 20th Century. A second wave of immigrants, fleeing great poverty and persecution in Eastern Europe, particularly Russia and Romania, arrived in Palestine between 1904 and 1914. Around 40,000 in total, these immigrants were typically young, secular and inspired by socialist ideals. They sought agricultural work, believing that both personal and national redemption could be achieved through physical toil on the land of Israel. The life they chose was beset with great poverty, disease and hardship. Many left in disappointment, but by 1914 the Jewish population had risen to 90,000.

Growing anti-Semitic hostility throughout Europe spurred increasing numbers of Jewish refugees to move to Palestine throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Many Jews were murdered in Ukraine in the aftermath of First World War. Other European countries enacted anti-Semitic legislation throughout the 1920s. In 1924, Poland began to impose severe economic restrictions on its three million Jews. But as more and more Jews faced discrimination in Europe, doors of immigration were closed elsewhere, including new restrictions on immigration to the United States. In 1933, the Nazi Party came to power in Germany and immediately began enforcing anti-Semitic laws. This created a new and unprecedented wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine. By 1936, the Jewish population of Palestine was approaching 400,000, close to 30% of the total. However, with war looming, and Britain keen not to alienate the Arab world, in 1939 Jewish immigration to Palestine was severely restricted by the British.

By 1945, the Nazi Holocaust had exterminated approximately six million Jews in Europe. After the war, well over 100,000 surviving Jews were in displaced persons camps. Tens of thousands of these survivors attempted to bypass the British blockade to enter Palestine. Many of those that failed were forcibly interned by the British in detention camps in Cyprus. After the State of Israel was established in 1948, its doors were opened to these refugees. Israel also absorbed hundreds of thousands of Jews who left as emigrants and refugees from countries in the Middle East and North Africa as a result of the War of Independence. In 1949, 45,000 Jews flew to Israel from Yemen, and in 1951-52, a further 130,000 arrived from Iraq.

Since Israel's independence the Jewish population has swelled through immigration from around the world and natural increase. Major waves of immigration have come from Morocco (250,000), North America (200,000) and Ethiopia (76,000), as well as significant contingents from South America and Europe. During the Communist era, Jews in the Soviet Union were prevented from moving to Israel. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, close to one million Jews moved to Israel from the former Soviet Union. 34,000 Jews have moved to Israel from Britain since 1948. By 2013, Israel's population exceeded 8 million, of whom over 6 million were Jewish.

The objective of establishing a Jewish homeland in Israel gained strong international support with the Balfour Declaration, issued by the British government in 1917. The British government's decision to support the foundation of a national home for the Jewish people was made known in the form of a letter written by then-foreign secretary Lord Balfour to Zionist leader Lord Rothschild. In September 1922, the League of Nations granted Britain a Mandate over Palestine, noting the 'historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine' and the 'grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country.' Under the British Mandate, three-quarters of the territory east of the Jordan River formed the Emirate of Transjordan (later the Kingdom of Jordan), and was closed to Jewish immigration. The remaining territory remained open to Jewish immigration.

As the Second World War drew closer, the British government, fearing the loss of allies in the Arab and Muslim world, moved away from supporting Jewish immigration to Palestine. Finally, in 1939, as the threat to the Jews of Europe reached new heights, Britain issued the MacDonald White Paper, in which Jewish immigration was severely restricted.

Between 1939 and 1945, the German Nazi Party, with its allies throughout Europe, murdered approximately six million Jews. The Holocaust was a genocide carried out with ruthless efficiency on an industrial scale throughout Europe. The Jewish people had no place of refuge. Palestinian Arab leaders welcomed the Nazis' rise to power, believing that in opposition to the British and the Jews, they shared common interests. The most senior Palestinian leader, Haj Amin al-Husseini, cooperated with the Nazis, and in November 1941, met personally with Hitler in an attempt to forge an alliance. Meanwhile, 30,000 Palestinian Jews joined the British army to fight against the Nazis, despite the restrictions of the White Paper preventing Jewish immigration to Palestine.

After the war, many thousands of Jewish refugees who had survived the Holocaust were in refugee camps in Europe. Having been robbed of all property and rights, most were unable and unwilling to return to their countries of origin. Some who tried to return after the war were subjected to further attacks. Many of the refugees expressed their desire to move to Palestine.

In this climate, the Jewish Agency, which represented the Jewish community in Palestine, with American political support, called for 100,000 Jews to be allowed to enter Palestine. The British government refused to agree. This led to illegal Jewish immigration and a direct confrontation between the British government and the Jews of Palestine. Some Jewish extremist groups, the Irgun and Lechi, began to attack British military targets. The British forcefully suppressed all acts of Jewish resistance, at one stage arresting 3,000 people. Over 50,000 Jews who had survived the Holocaust and attempted to enter Palestine were forcibly interned in British camps in Cyprus. In 1946, the leader of the Jews in Palestine, David Ben-Gurion, attempted to unite Jewish resistance forces. The agreement broke down after the Irgun undertook its most notorious act, the bombing of the British headquarters at the King David Hotel. This act was denounced by the majority of Palestine's Jews.

In 1947, the British turned the question of the future of Palestine over to the United Nations, which established the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to determine its future.

The UN recommended partition into a Jewish and an Arab state, with Jerusalem under international control. The plan would have created a Jewish state with a Jewish majority on the Mediterranean coast, western Galilee, and Negev Desert. On 29 November 1947, the UN General Assembly voted in favour of Resolution 181, to approve the UNSCOP plan, by 33 votes to 13.

The Jewish Agency, representing the Jews of Palestine, accepted the plan, but the Arab Higher Committee, the Palestinian Arabs' political representatives, rejected it. As the British Mandate formally ended, on 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel in line with the UN resolution.

Fact Sheet: The Peace Process

Every Israeli government since 2000 has publicly committed Israel to the two-state solution as the best way to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This solution, as defined by the Clinton parameters in December 2000, is a solution which results in, 'the state of Palestine as the homeland of the Palestinian people and the state of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people.' Since 2000 the two-state model has been accepted internationally and endorsed by UN Security Council Resolutions.

The principle of the two-state solution is that a Palestinian state will be created within the territory of Gaza and the West Bank, and will exist alongside and at peace with Israel. Repeated polls indicate that a majority of Israelis and Palestinians accept this idea, though it involves difficult compromises on both sides. For Israel it means giving up control of territory in the West Bank which is of great historic, cultural and strategic importance for the Jewish people. For Palestinians it means accepting that the solution for the Palestinian refugee problem lies not in refugees returning to Israel but in returning to a new Palestinian state.

However, the alternatives are not acceptable to most Israelis and Palestinians. Under the status quo, Palestinians living under Israeli control in Gaza and the West Bank are denied the rights of citizenship. This in turn damages Israel's international standing. Many Israelis fear that as the population of Arabs in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank begins to overtake the population of Jews, the democratic legitimacy of Israel as a Jewish state will be undermined. Furthermore, the conflict is a costly burden on Israeli society which most Israelis would like to see confined to history. For this reason they see the creation of a Palestinian state, which will secure the rights of Palestinian Arabs, as being in Israel's interest, as long as it comes with sufficient security guarantees. The alternative, of a single binational state of Jews and Arabs, is not acceptable to most Jews, who want the character of Israel as the homeland for the Jewish people to be secured.

Issues in the Peace Process

Borders

The PLO claims the West Bank and the Gaza Strip within pre-1967 borders for their state. Israel has accepted in principle the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. There is a broad consensus in Israel that the larger settlement blocs around Jerusalem and on key strategic points protecting Israel's narrow coastal plain should remain part of Israel. The Clinton Parameters in 2000 and the unofficial Geneva Accords in 2003 accepted this principle and suggested some form of land swap whereby the new Palestinian state would receive other territory from Israel in return for the settlement blocs. The Palestinians want territory within Israel to build a transport link that connects Gaza and the West Bank, and this could form part of an exchange deal. In 2008, under the Annapolis process, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas conducted negotiations along these lines, though there were gaps between the sides on how much land would be exchanged.

Security

Israel's recent experience of withdrawing from territory in the hope that it will bring peace has been very negative. After Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon in 2000, and from Gaza in 2005, Israel was subsequently attacked from both locations, in particular with rockets. Any deal to bring about Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank will have to address Israel's legitimate security fears. Israel will not be willing to allow the establishment of a military force in the West Bank or Gaza that could threaten Israel, and expects that a future Palestinian state will be demilitarised. It will further expect a future Palestinian state to act decisively to prevent attacks on Israel originating from within its territory. Israel will also want to retain a military presence in the Jordan valley in the initial period after the creation of a Palestinian state to prevent arms smuggling into the West Bank. The Palestinians are opposed to an Israeli military presence, and have proposed a third party international presence instead.

Refugees

A peace deal will have to define a solution to the question of Palestinian refugees. The Palestinians claim the right of return for the descendents of refugees from the 1948 war to return to their homes in Israel. The inclusion of descendents as refugees is a unique definition not applied in any other situation globally. Israel does not believe it is responsible for resettling the refugees, believing their plight to be the responsibility of the Arab states that rejected the 1947 Partition Plan, started the war, and then refused to resettle the refugees created by that war in their own territory. In any case, no Israeli government will accept a solution that would allow millions of Palestinians to settle in Israel. This would effectively spell the end of the Jewish majority and the viability of Israel as a democratic Jewish state. Israel proposes that refugees be compensated with the help of the international community, and be resettled either in the new Palestinian state or in their country of residence. This is the principle of two states for two peoples.

Water

The region has limited water resources and Israel currently depends on the West Bank for a significant part of its water supply. Any peace deal will have to address both the allocation and management of water from the Jordan River and the underground aquifers in the West Bank. In 2006, Israel began operating the largest desalination plant of its kind in the world on its Mediterranean coast and is building several more to address its water needs. This may make a solution on the question of water easier to address in the future.

Jerusalem

Both Israelis and Palestinians have a very strong cultural, historical and political attachment to Jerusalem and both claim it to be their capital. Particularly sensitive are the Old City and its religious sites. If Palestinian demands to return to pre-1967 borders were taken literally, it would result in the re-division of Jerusalem and the loss of Israeli sovereignty over the Old City, which is something that most Israelis would not be willing to contemplate. Both the Clinton Parameters and the Geneva Accords proposed a solution whereby Arab neighbourhoods would come under Palestinian sovereignty and Jewish neighbourhoods under Israeli sovereignty. Previous negotiations have proposed a special regime for the Old City.

Fact Sheet: Settlements

Israel has a long legacy of accepting territorial compromise as the way to solve its disputes in the region. The Jewish community of Palestine accepted the UN Partition Plan in 1947, and Israel accepted the 'land for peace' formula set out in UN Security Council Resolution 242. Israel's position today is that the future borders should be the subject of negotiation between Israel and the Palestinians. Most Israelis expect that the most populous settlements, which sit on about 5% of the West Bank, will remain part of Israel. The Clinton Parameters, which followed the Camp David peace talks of 2000, proposed a deal whereby Israel would keep the larger and most populous settlement blocs which it considers vital for its security, and would transfer other territory from Israeli to Palestinian sovereignty in return. This principle of a land swap was also accepted in the unofficial 2003 Geneva Accords, which were negotiated by Israeli and Palestinian peace campaigners. It was also the basis of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians during the Annapolis process over the course of 2008.

This would still mean Israel would have to withdraw from the more isolated settlements. Israel set a precedent for evacuating settlements in return for peace when it withdrew from the settlements that were built in the Sinai Peninsula after the Six Day War. This came as part of the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in which the Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egyptian hands. In the summer of 2005, Israel unilaterally evacuated all of its settlements in the Gaza Strip and part of the northern West Bank.

The progressive case for Israel

The following article appeared in the JC on 11 March 2011:
Israel – a progressive cause

By Robert Philpot

At the time of the founding of the state of Israel, David Ben Gurion said it was not enough for the Jewish state to be simply Jewish - it had to be fully democratic, offering full citizenship to all its peoples. It was a remarkable statement made at the very moment when Israel faced the first of the wars of survival which have periodically threatened its very existence.

Remarkable because, as the history of many nations, including our own, shows, the real test of a nation's commitment to democracy is not whether that commitment is made during times of peace and tranquility, but whether it can be sustained during times of war and difficulty.

Israel's steadfast adherence to liberal democratic principles, even at the hardest of times, is one that should be admired and supported by democrats everywhere.

This is especially so because - despite welcome developments in the Middle East over recent weeks - Israel remains the only democracy in a region where monarchical autocracies, zealous theocracies and military authoritarianism are the most prevalent form of government. But while democrats of all political persuasions should give their support to Israel, those of us on the left should do so particularly.

Israel is, after all, a country founded on social democratic principles; and the Israeli Labor Party, which, alongside our own Labour Party, is a member of the Socialist International, was the country's dominant political force for decades. Indeed, it is because of those social democratic principles that Israel's attributes are undeniably progressive: a free and vibrant media; a robust and independent judiciary; strong trade unions; a generous welfare state; and a commitment to free, world-class education that enables Israel to have one of the highest-skilled workforces on earth.

Contrast, too, the equal rights which women, gays and lesbians and other minorities enjoy in Israel with the second-class citizenship and persecution meted out to such groups in most, if not all, of Israel's neighbours.

Sadly, of course, this view of Israel is not shared by everyone on the British left. A small but vocal and vociferous fringe seeks to demonise Israel and its people. Too often, alongside some on the right who have long harboured a dislike of Israel's progressivism, they appear able to use their power and influence in the media to distort debate not only about the Middle East peace process, but also about Britain's own foreign policy.

This is why, alongside Labour Friends of Israel, Progress believes the debate we are jointly hosting next week, on making the progressive case for Israel, is so important. We believe that it is essential that we not only demonstrate the support for Israel that exists within the Labour Party but, more importantly, challenge those who seek to deny Israel's right to exist and show why that point of view simply has no place at all in the Labour Party.

Equally, we believe it is important to assert Israel's right to defend itself and to have its rightful security concerns, and its efforts to promote peace, appreciated, not ignored.

The calls for boycotts and attempts to exploit our courts to exclude Israeli voices from public debate in this country are, of course, simply the most obvious manifestation of this anti-Israeli fringe. The boycott movement, particularly amongst some British trade unions, is also the most self-indulgent, for it would achieve nothing beyond harming the very people on whose behalf it is apparently being mounted.

Indeed, its most practical effect would be to stifle the growing co-operation, endorsed and supported by the International Trade Union Confederation, between Israeli and Palestinian trade unions, co-operation which provides the building blocks for trust and co-operation upon which a long-term peace settlement can be built.

But while it is self-indulgent, the boycott movement is also pernicious. The impact of the attempts to isolate and demonise Israel and its people are being felt week in, week out by Jewish people here in Britain in the form of rising anti-Semitism. This is something the left should unreservedly condemn, not attempt to excuse.

I would, of course, like to see Israelis elect a more progressive government than they currently have - something I would also like to see the British people do, too. But, in the spirit of its internationalist tradition, the real challenge for Labour is to support shared values where we see them and thus to work with progressive Israelis and Palestinians to promote a two-state solution.

That means supporting both those Palestinians who want a state committed to freedom and democracy, not Hamas' violent, dictatorial brand of Islamism, and those Israelis who are already attempting to reach out to them.

Section 6

Resources

Key Website Addresses

Academic Friends of Israel

www.academics-for-israel.org

The Academic Friends of Israel has been campaigning against the academic boycott of Israel since 2002.

Anglo-Israel Association

<http://angloisraelassociation.com/>

The AIA was established in 1949 by Brigadier General Sir Wyndham Deedes, the first Chief Secretary to the British High Commissioner to Mandate Palestine, who thought that it should not be for Jews alone to support the State of Israel. The AIA today, is an independent charity that enjoys the active support of people from different faiths and none, across the entire political spectrum. The Association's primary purpose is to promote wider and better understanding of Israel in the UK; to encourage exchanges between both countries at every level and generally to support activities which foster good will between British and Israeli citizens.

Beyond Images

<http://www.beyondimages.info/>

The purpose of the Beyond Images Project is to equip Israel advocates with facts, arguments, resources and techniques to advocate for Israel in a pro-active and balanced way. The Project is independent and run by volunteers.

BICOM

www.bicom.org.uk

BICOM is an independent British organisation dedicated to creating a more supportive environment for Israel in Britain.

Board of Deputies of British Jews

<http://www.bod.org.uk/>

The Board of Deputies of British Jews exists to promote and defend the religious rights and civil liberties of British Jewry. As the community's democratically elected cross-communal organisation, the Board engages with Government, media and wider society, providing a unique means through which all British Jews can be heard and represented.

Britain Israel Trade Union Dialogue

<https://www.bitud.org.uk/>

Britain Israel Trade Union Dialogue (BITUD) was established to promote solidarity and strong links between British, Israeli and Palestinian trade unions. BITUD supports a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine that delivers peace, economic progress, security and justice for both nations.

Christian Friends of Israel

<http://www.cfi.org.uk/>

Christian Friends of Israel is a non-denominational Christian organisation seeking to break down barriers and build bridges of genuine friendship with Israel and the UK Jewish community.

Community Security Trust

<http://www.thecst.org.uk/>

CST provides physical security, training and advice for the protection of British Jews. CST assists victims of antisemitism and monitors antisemitic activities and incidents. CST represents British Jewry to Police, Government and media on antisemitism and security.

Conservative Friends of Israel

<http://www2.cfoi.co.uk/>

CFI works to promote its twin aims of supporting Israel and promoting Conservatism. With close to 2000 activists as members – alongside 80% of Tory MPs – CFI is active at every level of the Party. CFI organises numerous events in and around Westminster, takes Conservative parliamentarians and

candidates on delegations to Israel, campaigns hard for Tory candidates in target seats, and works to ensure that Israel's case is fairly represented in Parliament.

Embassy of Israel <http://embassies.gov.il/london/>

Engage <http://engageonline.wordpress.com/>

Engage was created to arm people with arguments and facts that they could use to counter the propaganda of the boycott campaign within the Association of University Teachers. Engage grew from a being a resource for that particular campaign into being a resource that aims to help people counter the boycott Israel campaign in general, as well as the assumptions and misrepresentations that lie behind it.

Friends of Israel Initiative <http://www.friendsofisraelinitiative.org/>

Under the leadership of former Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar a high level group met in Paris in the middle of 2010 to launch a new project in defence of Israel's right to exist. This "Friends of Israel Initiative" has been joined by such notable figures as Nobel Peace Prize Laureate David Trimble, Peru's former president Alejandro Toledo, Italian philosopher Marcello Pera, former United States Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton, British historian Andrew Roberts, and others. Their key aim is to counter the growing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and its right to live in peace within safe and defensible borders.

Honest Reporting <http://honestreporting.com/>

Monitors the news for bias, inaccuracy, or other breach of journalistic standards in coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Ireland Israel Alliance <https://www.irelandisrael.ie/>

The Ireland Israel Alliance (IIA) is a non-profit organisation based in Ireland. The aim of IIA is to bring clarity to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to ensure it receives fair and impartial treatment within the Irish media. In order to do this, they work with the Irish government across all political parties, public interest groups and educational establishments. They also use social media to engage with and inform the wider public about Israel.

Israel Britain Alliance <https://www.israelbritain.org.uk/>

The Israel- Britain Alliance (IBA) is a UK based organisation that celebrates Britain's relationship with the State of Israel.

Israel Advocacy Movement <http://www.israeladvocacy.net/>

The Israel Advocacy Movement is a grassroots campaign that seeks to educate the general public about Israel at street level.

Jewish Chronicle <http://www.thejc.com/>

Jewish Labour Movement <http://www.jlm.org.uk/>

Founded in 2004 as the successor to Poale Zion, the JLM continues to demonstrate its commitment to Poale Zion's long-standing ideals in a manner appropriate for the twenty-first century. It views Zionism as the national liberation movement of the Jewish people and work to promote a secure, progressive, just and successful State of Israel. The JLM is an affiliate of the World Labour Zionist Movement. The JLM is the only Jewish entity affiliated to the Labour Party, both nationally and locally, and constantly presses the Party, both inside and outside government, to campaign vigorously against racism and especially the BNP, as well as promoting a viable peace plan to end the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Jewish Leadership Council <http://www.thejlc.org/>

The JLC exists to strengthen the major institutions of British Jewry, to promote cooperation between them and to help the leadership of the community articulate a confident and compelling narrative of mainstream Jewish life in the United Kingdom.

Jewish National Fund

<http://www.jnf.co.uk/>

JNF is Israel's leading humanitarian and environmental charity. It raises funds for the building blocks of everyday life in Israel such as reservoirs, irrigation systems, desalination plants, forest planting, recycling schemes, roads, housing and healthcare centres.

Jewish News

<https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/>

JW3

<http://www.jw3.org.uk/>

JW3 is the Jewish community, arts and culture centre on the Finchley Road, London. The building hosts a wide range of activities: from eating to exercise, from the arts to debate, from dating to nesting, with activities that bring people together, whatever their religious affiliation.

Labour Friends of Israel

<http://www.lfi.org.uk/>

Labour Friends of Israel is an organisation of Labour supporters promoting a two state solution, with Israel, safe, secure and recognised within its borders, living peacefully alongside a democratic and viable Palestinian state.

Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel

<http://ldfi.org.uk/>

The Liberal Democrat Friends of Israel exists to support and promote policies which lead to peace and security for Israel in the context of a comprehensive and lasting Middle East peace settlement. It works to encourage a strong understanding of Israel unique political situation as the only democracy in the Middle East. It seeks to develop a relationship of trust and mutual understanding between the Liberal Democrats and the Jewish Community.

Liberal Judaism

<http://www.liberaljudaism.org/>

Limmud

<http://www.limmud.org/>

Limmud is an ambitious and passionate organisation with a global reputation for creating events with a lively approach to Jewish learning.

Makom

<http://makomisrael.org/>

In 2004 North American Jewish communities and the Jewish Agency began a partnership now called Makōm – the Israel Engagement Network. Through this network they have succeeded in laying intellectual groundwork and inspiring new initiatives that have significantly advanced the field of Israel education.

Masorti Judaism

<http://www.masorti.org.uk/>

Movement for Reform Judaism

<http://www.reformjudaism.org.uk/>

New Israel Fund UK

<http://www.newisraelfund.org.uk/>

The New Israel Fund UK is the leading organization committed to equality and democracy for all Israelis. NIF are a partnership of Israelis and supporters of Israel worldwide, dedicated to a vision of Israel as both the Jewish homeland and a shared society at peace with itself and its neighbors. NIF strengthens organisations and leaders that work to achieve equality for all the citizens of the state; realise the civil and human rights of all, including Palestinian citizens of Israel; recognize and reinforce the essential pluralism of Israeli society; and empower groups on the economic margins of Israeli society.

Stand With Us UK

<http://standwithus.co.uk/>

StandWithUs is an international organization dedicated to bringing peace to the Middle East by educating about Israel and challenging the misinformation that often surrounds the Middle East conflict.

UK Media Watch

<https://ukmediawatch.org/>

UK Media Watch promotes fair and accurate coverage of Israel.

Union of Jewish Students

<http://www.ujs.org.uk/>

The Union of Jewish Student's (UJS) mission is: 'To create meaningful Jewish campus experiences and inspire Jewish students to make an enduring commitment to their Jewish identity, Israel and the community.' UJS serves as the sole communal body representing all Jewish students to the Jewish and wider community. As a Union directed by its members, UJS' priority is to meet the needs and demands of our members both individually and through Jewish Societies (J-Socs).

United Jewish Israel Appeal

<http://www.ujia.org/>

UJIA's strategy is designed to help guarantee a sustainable and positive future for the people of the Galil and the Jewish community of the UK. Their programme is built around young people and education, which we see as the key to securing our future. The future of Israel and the Jewish Diaspora are dependent upon each other. UJIA creates the 'Living Bridge' between our communities.

United Synagogue

<http://www.theus.org.uk/>

We Believe in Israel

<http://www.webelieveinrael.org.uk/>

We Believe in Israel is a UK grassroots network of people united in believing in the right of the State of Israel to live in peace and security. We aim to support and facilitate activists who seek through local engagement and campaigning to create a more complete understanding of Israel and its situation in the UK, and to engage others in our communities, be they friends, neighbours, colleagues, local elected office holders or the media so that Israel's case gets a fair hearing.

WIZO UK

<http://wizouk.org/>

WIZO.uk is the largest Jewish women's organisation in Great Britain and Ireland. WIZO is a non-party political movement of Zionist women providing a powerful voice on human rights issues and concerns relating to the status of women.

Yachad

<http://www.yachad.org.uk/>

Yachad is pro-Israel, pro-peace. Yachad believes that:

- Israel's best hope for safety and security lies in a comprehensive peace with its neighbours. That means a two-state solution: Israel and Palestine.
- Time is running out and the two-state solution is in peril
- Now is the moment for diaspora Jews to play their part and do all they can in the search for peace.

Zionist Federation

<http://www.zionist.org.uk/>

The Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland was established in 1899 to campaign for a permanent homeland for the Jewish people. The Zionist Federation today represents the UK Zionist Movement more than 120 organisations, and over 50,000 affiliated members. Its function is to support, co-ordinate and facilitate the work of all its affiliates nationwide, and to continue its commitment to the Zionist youth movements. The Zionist Federation aims to encourage the participation of Jews in Zionist activities including education, culture, Hebrew language and Israel information, underpinned by our belief that the main goal of Zionism is Aliyah. The Zionist Federation is an umbrella organisation encompassing most of the Zionist organizations and individuals in the country and, as such, represents the Zionist movement in the United Kingdom.

How to source and check sources

Israel is at the centre of a battle for public opinion, with the media (both traditional and online) as the battlefield. Because the media can influence public opinion, which directly affects foreign policy towards Israel, it is important to be alert to biased or unbalanced reporting.

Don't assume that everything you read in the media about Israel is factually accurate.

It is always best to double check reports with authoritative sources.

Similarly, when making the case for Israel, make sure any facts or figures you

cite are from reputable sources and will stand up to scrutiny.

A good starting point is BICOM's website:

<http://www.bicom.org.uk/research/> background information and links to other websites

<http://www.bicom.org.uk/latest-news/> has up-to-the-minute analysis and facts about events as they unfold

Primary sources for news about Israel include:

Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Israeli Embassy in London

I24 news

Ynet

Haaretz

Times of Israel

Jerusalem Post

<http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/>

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