



16 June 2021
י' תמוז תשפ"א

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP, The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

I write on behalf of The Zionist Federation of the UK and Ireland, a 122-year-old organisation formed in 1899 to help facilitate the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland. The Zionist Federation was formally named in the closing sentence of the Balfour Declaration of 1917.

Today, The Zionist Federation works to promote and celebrate Zionism and Israel in the UK and Ireland. We represent 30 constituent organisations comprising approximately 50,000 people from across the entire spectrum of political, religious and cultural viewpoints, from small support groups to larger UK institutions. This work includes our annual Lobby Day for Israel, an event which this year was attended by MPs from across the political spectrum.

Prime Minister, today your representatives will be participating in a final detailed planning meeting for the September 2021 'Durban IV' conference in New York. This conference will once again re-endorse the original 'Durban Declaration.' Whilst Australia, Canada and the United States have all confirmed they will not be participating in Durban IV, we note that HM Government has yet to confirm its position.

As you are aware, what had promised to be a moral and just conference against racism in Durban in 2001 quickly descended, in both the NGO forum and the inter-government meeting, into a shameful demonstration of antisemitic, anti-Israel rhetoric resulting in the adoption of the 'Durban Declaration', a declaration which singled out one country only for racism: Israel.

The Durban conference also saw the creation of the Boycott, Divest, Sanction (BDS) movement. The BDS movement, together with other likeminded organisations is complicit in the significant increase in anti-Semitic attacks in the UK and across the globe. It capitalises on Israel's response to repeated hostilities by Hamas in Gaza targeting Israeli civilian populations.

The subsequent Durban II and Durban III conferences only sought to double down on the Declaration, and as you no doubt recall, then Prime Minister David Cameron pulled out of the 2011 Durban III conference precisely because he did not want the UK to be associated with an antisemitic event.

The Zionist Federation of the UK and Ireland

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Patrons H.E the Israeli Ambassador Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis Marquess of Salisbury KCVO PC DL Dame Louise Ellman Mike Freer MP
Sandra & John Barnett Sir Trevor Chinn CVO Tony Coren Louise & Hilton Nathanson Sandra & Harvey Rose
Chairman Richard P Woolf **Executive Director** Steve Winston



HM Government has repeatedly stated its opposition to BDS, and we welcomed your pledge, on Wednesday 19th May, to support Britain's Jewish community in any way it could after the recent unprecedented increase in antisemitic attacks, resulting in many British Jews feeling less safe in the UK than has been the case for more than two decades. We, therefore, appeal to you to stand by your assurance, and that of your government, and immediately announce the UK's withdrawal from Durban IV.

At a time when the world is seeing a very significant rise in antisemitic attacks, it is incumbent upon HM Government to stand firmly with its Jewish community and say "no" to anti-Jewish racism. There is no place for any racism in our country, or the world, and that includes anti-Semitism.

*Thank you for your support
in this matter*

yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Woolf', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard P Woolf
Acting Chair