Foreign & Commonwealth Office

FCO Press Release: British Trade Envoy visits the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Baroness Morris of Bolton, the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Jordan and Kuwait visited the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, this week. Her visit focused on building partnerships with Palestinian businesses, following the visit of UK Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for International Trade Mark Garnier in September.

During her visit, Baroness Morris visited Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and East Jerusalem to discuss how to improve links between Palestinian and British businesses. In Nablus she visited Anabtawi Trading Group, and met its president Ziad Anabtawi to discuss the challenges facing the Palestinian agricultural sector. She held a series of business meetings in Ramallah with Palestinian business leaders to discuss opportunities for cooperation. Also in Ramallah she visited the Jaguar Land Rover official dealer in the OPTs, Ritz Motors, one of the premier brands in the Palestinian market.

As part of her visit, Baroness Morris met Fadi Hidmi, General Director of the Jerusalem Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to discuss the economic challenges facing Palestinians in East Jerusalem. She also met Maha Abu Shusheh, the chairwoman of the Palestinian Business Women Forum, to learn more about the potential of women in the Palestinian private sector.

Finally, Baroness Morris visited the Makhrour Area of the Cremisan valley, west of Bethlehem, where she saw the effects on the Palestinian economy of the Separation Barrier being built on private Palestinian land.

At the end of her visit, Baroness Morris said:

> *"I was pleased to be able to visit the Occupied Palestinian Territories for the fourth time. I had fruitful meetings, toured impressive Palestinian companies and learnt more about the challenges facing the Palestinian private sector. But more importantly, I witnessed firsthand the creativity and potential of Palestinians. We*

look forward to see the Palestine-Britain business council intensify its activities in the coming months".

"Settlements are illegal under international law. As underlined in the July report of the Middle East Quartet, settlement activity undermines trust and makes a two state solution much harder to achieve."

END

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