



September 2024

A Cheann Comhairle,

I am writing to withdraw as a member of the *Ireland-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group*.

My reason for doing so is that the term "Friendship Group" is misleading, and I am conscious that my membership of this group has been taken - by some - to suggest support for the Netanyahu government and the appalling atrocities it has conducted daily in Gaza and the West Bank.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

I utterly and unequivocally condemn the continuing and relentless onslaught on Palestinian civilians at the hands of the Israeli Defence Forces. I have also been steadfast in my condemnation of the senseless slaughter and provocation of innocent Israelis and the taking of hostages on the 7th of October. This is clear from my own contribution in the Dáil on the matter.

My membership of this group was motivated by my deep belief in a two-state solution; one agreed by both the Palestinian and Israeli states, not one designed by Israel. And one that guarantees both sides' equal rights, safety and sovereignty.

So, for the avoidance of any ambiguity about my position I am withdrawing from this group with immediate effect.

Also, A Cheann Comhairle, it may be time to review the title of these "Friendship Groups".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Lahart', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**John Lahart TD**

Dublin South West