

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party
for the South East of England

Eleanor Ross - Corporate Communications
Lloyds TSB Bank

eleanor.ross@lloydstsb.co.uk

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Dear Eleanor,

I am a member of the European Parliament's delegation to Palestine and work closely with a number of UK based organisations providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians, both during the current crisis and more generally. These include Interpal. I have been advised by Interpal that Lloyds TSB has taken the unusual step of intervening in a relationship between Interpal and the Islamic Bank of Britain (IBB) and asked the latter to immediately cease all dealings with the former. This has resulted in Interpal facing enormous difficulties as its access to a clearing bank has effectively been withdrawn. Interpal's humanitarian work is effective because it deals directly with organisations in Palestine and being unable to send funds to them is a significant setback, particularly at the current time.

I understand that Lloyds TSB have already received a number of letters about this from Interpal and that your standard response has been to refuse to discuss "matters relating to individual customers with third parties". As I am sure you are aware, IBB have made public their correspondence from you, which states:

"we do not wish you to transfer, receive, process or in any way deal with any funds, or in any way whatsoever... be involved with any type of banking arrangements for Interpal which either uses or involves any products or services provided by us."

If you are unwilling to discuss this matter with Interpal, how are they supposed to seek redress or challenge the judgement you appear to have made against them? Moreover, Lloyds TSB has not, to my knowledge, provided IBB with any explanation for its decision to ban them acting for Interpal either - and they are not a third party.

Interpal has withstood three previous investigations by the Charity Commission into its affairs and proven that the US's OFAC proscription is unsubstantiated. I am shocked that Lloyds TSB has acted in this way, alienating huge numbers of Muslim customers and risking the vital work that Interpal are engaged with. The bank has a responsibility not to practice discrimination and to abide by the premise of 'innocent until proven guilty'. Until such time as Interpal is ever found to be breaching Charity Commission rules, I would urge you to reconsider your instructions to IBB.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.

Suite 58, The Hop Exchange, 24 Southwark Street, London SE1 1TY, UK
Tel: 020 7407 6281 Fax: 020 7234 0183 E-mail: carolinelucas@greenmeps.org.uk
Web: www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk