



BRISMES

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

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BBC Complaints

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing as President of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES), Britain's leading academic society for the Middle East with over 350 members.

I note that the NEUROSCIENCE article 'Why you should read this out loud' incorrectly states that Ariel University is 'in Israel': <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200917-the-surprising-power-of-reading-aloud>. In fact, Ariel University is on a settlement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, not Israel. The British government is unambiguous that Israeli settlements are illegal.

As the Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa said in a recent letter to BRISMES (21.6.20), "The UK's position on Israeli settlements is clear: they are illegal under international law and damaging to renewed efforts to launch peace negotiations. The UK expressed our deep disappointment over the decision to upgrade Ariel's university centre, due to its presence in a settlement that is illegal according to international law, at the UN Security Council on 27 December 2012." The BBC description of Ariel University as 'in Israel' thus takes a political position which is directly opposed to that of international law.

I strongly urge you to amend the address which you give for Ariel from 'Israel' to 'Occupied Palestinian Territories' in accordance with international law, also making plain that Ariel is an illegal Israeli settlement.

Yours sincerely,

Professor The Baroness Afshar
President, BRISMES