Britain's FM Confirms: We Were Closely Involved in Drafting UN Anti-settlements Resolution

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British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson on Tuesday confirmed during a session of Parliament in London that the U.K. was closely involved in the formulation of UN Security Council Resolution 2334 concerning settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The British involvement was first revealed in Haaretz about two weeks ago.

“Kerry was completely right to draw attention to the illegal settlements and he was completely right to draw attention to the substance of Resolution 2334," Johnson said, referring to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.

"I want to remind you that the U.K. was closely involved in the drafting of that resolution. It was an Egyptian-generated resolution and we only supported it because it contained new language pointing out the infamy of terrorism that Israeli suffers every day,” said Johnson in response to questions from MPs.

Two weeks ago, Haaretz reported that Britain was a leading player in drafting the resolution on settlements and pushing it to a vote. Israeli and Western diplomats say that British jurists and diplomats worked directly with the Palestinians on the wording of the resolution before it was first distributed by the Egyptians. They say the British did this in secret, without informing Israel.

After Egypt withdrew its plans to put forward the resolution, the British encouraged New Zealand to push the resolution to a vote even without Egyptian support for the move.

In his remarks in Parliament, Johnson expressed support for Kerry, even though just days earlier, the Office of the Prime Minister in Britain issued a statement critical of the content of speech Kerry delivered after the Security Council vote.

A British government spokesman said in an official statement to the press then that it was not right to focus solely on the settlements because the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is more complex than that. The British statement was highly unusual, especially in light of the role Britain played in drafting the resolution.

“We are also clear that the settlements are far from the only problem in this conflict,” Prime Minister Theresa May’s spokesman said in the statement, which also took Kerry to task for his criticism of Netanyahu’s coalition.

“We do not believe that it is appropriate to attack the composition of the democratically elected government of an ally. The government believes that negotiations will only succeed when they are conducted between the two parties, supported by the international community,” said the spokesman.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with senior members and the heads of the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC in Jerusalem on Tuesday. He told them Israel has concrete information that the Obama administration was a partner in writing the anti-Israel United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 and applied pressure to pass it.

Netanyahu said the administration's decision reflects a sharp deviation from the long-term and traditional policy of U.S. governments from both parties.