



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development

12 November 2018

Your reference: ZA30085

Our reference: MIN-26136-2018

Sir Mark Hendrick MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your email of 19 October to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on behalf of a number of your constituent, about Yemen. I am replying as the Minister responsible for our relations with the Middle East and North Africa.

I share your constituents' concerns about the effects of the conflict on Yemeni civilians. We are acutely aware that during armed conflict, civilians often pay a heavy price. Addressing the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is a priority for the Government. The Foreign Secretary discussed this with Saudi Foreign Minister Al-Jubeir on 27 September at UN General Assembly in New York. I also spoke to Al-Jubeir on 30 October.

The UK takes its arms export responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of all relevant factors at the time of the application. We have kept the situation under careful review throughout the conflict in Yemen.

It is important to emphasise that no aspect of our commercial relationship with Saudi Arabia prevents us from speaking frankly and openly about human rights. During the Prime Minister's meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in March the Prime Minister raised her concerns on human rights. We will always be ready to speak out as a matter of principle.

In 2017/18 the Government committed £205 million in aid to Yemen, making the UK the third largest humanitarian donor to Yemen and the second largest to the UN appeal. We prioritised life-saving interventions including food and nutrition support to 1.7 million people and clean water and sanitation for an expected 1.2 million people. On 3 April, I announced an additional £170 million in response to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen for the financial year 2018/2019. This funding will meet the immediate food needs of 2.5 million Yemenis, and comes on top of over £570 million in bilateral support since the conflict began in 2015.

The UK has played a central role in diplomatic efforts to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict in Yemen. Resuming peace talks is the top priority. We welcome and fully support the work of the UN Special Envoy for Yemen in trying to achieve a political settlement and commend his efforts to date. We are providing over £1 million to the UN Special Envoy's office to bolster the UN's capacity to facilitate the peace process. We will continue to encourage all parties to engage seriously with the UN's peace proposals.

The British Government will remain at the forefront of efforts to find a political solution to the conflict. We are committed to using our resources to address the humanitarian crisis.

In care
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THE RT HON. ALISTAIR BURT MP
Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa