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Department  
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Sir Mark Hendrick MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir Mark

Thank you for your email of 4 July to the Foreign Secretary, on behalf of a number of your constituents, about Mrs Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who is detained in Iran. I am replying as the Minister responsible for our relations with the Middle East and North Africa.

On Saturday, 29 June, Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe and her husband Mr Ratcliffe ended their hunger strike, after 15 days. The Foreign Secretary recently met Mr Ratcliffe to reinforce the UK's support in bringing his wife home. The treatment of all British-Iranians detained in Iran, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, is a priority for the Government. We have made clear to the Iranian authorities that we expect them to ensure that Nazanin is treated humanely and in line with international standards, and we are requesting immediate consular access. I raised Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case, and those of other UK-Iranian dual national detainees, with my counterparts during my recent trip to Tehran in June.

In response to the lack of progress in Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case, the Foreign Secretary decided in March to take the unusual step of exercising diplomatic protection. This is an important diplomatic signal to Tehran that their behaviour is totally unacceptable. We will not accept Iran using our citizens as diplomatic leverage. While the Foreign Secretary was clear that diplomatic protection would not lead to immediate results, it is essential that we formally recognise that Iran has failed in its treatment of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe in its obligations under international law, and we will continue to consider using all the diplomatic and legal tools available to us to secure her release.

I can assure your constituents that all of our Iranian consular cases, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, will remain a priority until they are reunited with their families.

Andrew Murrison.

**The Rt Hon. Dr Andrew Murrison MP**  
**Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa**