



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

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28 February 2022

Iain Stewart MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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*Dear Iain*

Thank you for your correspondence of 15 February on behalf of Don Rowe & Jim Iley of the Quaker Centre about the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. I am replying as the Minister of State for South Asia.

I appreciate and sympathise with the concerns you have raised about the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

I am also deeply concerned about the serious and worsening humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. It is affecting well over half of the population, with 23 million facing acute food insecurity. This is now the world's most severe food security crisis.

The UK remains fully committed to supporting Afghanistan and its people. We have already announced a doubling of our humanitarian aid and development assistance commitment to Afghanistan, to £286 million for this financial year. Of this, the UK Government has announced various allocations since September 2021:

- Up to £30 million of life-saving aid to Afghanistan's neighbouring countries to help those who choose to leave Afghanistan, as part of our efforts to support regional stability.
- At the G20 by the Prime Minister, £50 million vital humanitarian aid to help people through the winter by providing life-saving food, and emergency health services as well as shelter and warm clothing.
- At the G7 by the Foreign Secretary, £75 million humanitarian aid.
- £10 million aid matching of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Afghanistan crisis appeal.
- £97 million UK aid pledged by the Foreign Secretary to provide life-saving food and emergency health support, as well as water and sanitation facilities.

The latest allocation of vital support means the UK is now delivering on its promise to double aid to Afghanistan. Between April 2021 and January 2022, we have disbursed £166 million inside Afghanistan. This will support over 60 hospitals, provide

health services for over 300,000 people; ensure 4.47 million people get emergency food assistance through the World Food Programme; and provide 6.1 million people with emergency health, water, protection, shelter, food, and education support through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund. We have also disbursed £10 million to the region to allow humanitarian partners to enable essential supplies such as shelters to be dispatched to the Afghan borders as well as setting up sanitation and hygiene facilities.

We are providing life-saving humanitarian assistance through the UN and other trusted Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) on the ground, who continue to ensure that our aid reaches those who need it most. We are pressing the Taliban to ensure that humanitarian principles are respected and aid agencies can work freely and without interference. All UK aid is subject to strict monitoring and verification to ensure it is only used to help the vulnerable people it is intended for. No funds are going directly to the Taliban.

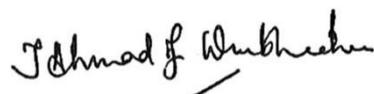
The UK will co-host a high-level pledging summit with the UN next month to support the response to the growing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Pledges made at the summit will go towards the UN's biggest-ever appeal for a single country, launched in January, for \$4.4 billion to help over 24.4 million Afghans needing urgent humanitarian help to survive. Funding is channelled through trusted UN agencies and charities on the ground. It is important that donors across the world step up to this challenge, including by responding to the UN's call for additional funding.

The UK played a key role in pressing for a resolution establishing a humanitarian exception under the UN Afghanistan sanctions regime. On 22 December 2021, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 2615, which provides an exemption from the assets freeze against listed members of the Taliban solely for the provision of humanitarian assistance and other activities to support basic needs. On 27 January, the UK Government laid the Afghanistan (Sanctions) (EU Exit) (Amendment) Regulations 2022, enabling the UK to implement UN Security Council Resolution 2615. This will save lives and reduce the impediments faced by humanitarian agencies in reaching those most in need.

As the Prime Minister has set out, we are working to ensure that Afghanistan does not again become a source of threats to the UK, for example from terrorism; to address the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Afghans; to protect regional stability; and to ensure respect for human rights, especially the rights of women, girls and members of minority groups. This will require a concerted and coordinated effort from the international community. The UK is playing a leading role through the G7, our seat in the UN Security Council and our contact with Taliban officials.

We ask for your patience and understanding as our work on Afghanistan continues.

*Yours sincerely,*



**LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON**

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