



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development

May 2018

Our reference: MIN/119046/2018

Ana Gomes MEP
European Parliament
by email

Dear Ms Gomes,

Thank you for your letter to the Prime Minister of 12 April regarding the human rights situation in Bahrain. I am replying as the Minister responsible for our relations with the Middle East.

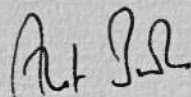
As you mention, Bahrain remains a 'Human Rights Priority Country' in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Human Rights Report. We continue to monitor events in Bahrain carefully and, if we have concerns, we raise them at an appropriate level, both in private and in public.

The UK operates one of the most robust arms export regimes in the world. British defence exports are consistent with the Government's Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. The situation in Bahrain is kept under careful and continual review.

On Yemen, peace talks are the top priority – there can be no military solution to the conflict. A political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis. The Yemeni parties must engage constructively and in good faith to overcome obstacles and find a political solution to end the conflict. Over three years into the current conflict, the humanitarian situation in Yemen is the worst in the world. The UN estimates that 22.2 million people (76% of

the population) are in need of humanitarian assistance, with 11.3 million (36%) in acute need. The UK will continue to play a leading role in supporting UN efforts to bring the conflict to an end through a political process.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alistair Burt', written in a cursive style.

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