

11 May 2017



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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Ana Maria Gomes MEP  
European Parliament

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*Dear Ms Gomes,*

Thank you for your letter of 4 May on behalf of your colleagues from the European Parliament asking for support for the new Syria accountability mechanism established by the UN General Assembly on 21 December 2016.

The UK has a long-standing commitment to accountability for human rights violations and abuses in Syria. We were one of the countries which co-sponsored the UN General Assembly Resolution which established this new mechanism. We are contributing £200,000 to support its work and have encouraged other countries also to contribute.

Since 2012, we have spent over £8 million funding the collection of documentary evidence to hold perpetrators in Syria to account, through prosecutions at the domestic or international level in national or international courts or tribunals that have, or may have in the future jurisdiction over these crimes. We will encourage those organisations which we continue to fund to fully support and cooperate with the new UN mechanism.

We will also continue to support the independent UN Commission of Inquiry's investigations into human rights violations and abuses in Syria. We lead on the UN Human Rights Council resolution on Syria which renews its mandate and we ensure that it contains language calling for accountability. We also continue to make the case for the situation in Syria to be referred to the International Criminal Court, though Russia has previously vetoed efforts to do this.

The UK continues to be at the forefront of global efforts to provide humanitarian aid in response to the Syrian crisis, having committed over £2.46 billion since 2012 to support vulnerable and displaced people inside Syria and to refugees in neighbouring countries.

The UK will continue to do all that we can to ensure that a long-term, lasting solution is found to resolve the current crisis in Syria. And in the meantime, we will maintain all efforts to help those people affected by it.

*/s/ sincerely*

*Alan Duncan*

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