



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



**Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State (Middle East,
North Africa, South Asia,
Commonwealth and the UN)**

**Prime Minister's Special
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Rt Hon. Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
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Our ref: MC2024/04248

19 March 2024

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 16 February to the Foreign Secretary on behalf of a number of your constituents, about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. I am replying as the Minister of State for the Middle East.

No-one wants to see this conflict continue. This means achieving a sustainable ceasefire - one that will last and prevent another generation of children living under the constant threat of war - with Hamas no longer in power in Gaza, able to threaten Israel with rocket attacks and other forms of terrorism. A ceasefire will not last if hostages are still being held and aid is prevented from entering Gaza.

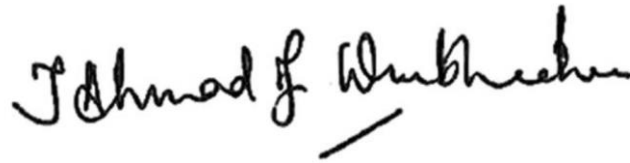
We want to see immediate and sustained agreements to be reached. These will allow for hostages to leave and vitally more medical and humanitarian aid to enter Gaza – helping to create the conditions for a durable peace. There is a desperate need for increased humanitarian support to Gaza. Our focus must be on practical solutions that save lives and end this conflict.

The UK trebled our aid commitment this financial year and is doing everything it can to get more aid in and open more crossings. The current levels are woefully inadequate. Israel must take immediate steps, working with other partners including the UN and Egypt, to significantly increase the flow of unhindered aid into Gaza including allowing prolonged humanitarian pauses, opening more routes into Gaza and restoring and sustaining water, fuel and electricity. We have supported the United Nations World Food Programme to deliver a new humanitarian land corridor from Jordan into Gaza, with 750 metric tons of life-saving food aid arriving in the first delivery.

Given the inter-relationship of water, sanitation, health and nutrition, the UK has prioritised support to these sectors through our trusted multilateral partners. This includes support for water treatment and wastewater treatment services; emergency medical teams and supplies; health sector coordination; and for monitoring and treating child malnutrition. We have deployed an experienced field epidemiologist to the region to help strengthen surveillance for infectious diseases. In addition, air and maritime shipments from the UK have included, among other things, wound care packs and thermal blankets.

For a peaceful solution, four things must happen. There must be: a Palestinian-led government in Gaza and the West Bank; a concrete plan to help reform and support the Palestinian Authority; a massive reconstruction plan for Gaza; and the political horizon towards delivering a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON

Minister of State

Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict