



HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

11 March 2022

To: All MPs

Dear Colleague,

CUSTOMS EASEMENT TO HELP TRANSPORT HUMANITARIAN AID TO UKRAINE

I am deeply concerned by the escalating conflict in Ukraine and, like you and your constituents, I want to help those affected by the invasion.

The Government strongly recommends that, wherever possible, organisations and people who would like to help donate cash rather than donating goods, through the [Disasters and Emergencies Committee](#) campaign and other trusted charities and humanitarian aid organisations. Cash can be transferred quickly to areas where it's needed, and individuals and aid organisations can use it to buy what's most needed. As you know, the Government has offered to match-fund donations to the Disasters and Emergencies Committee campaign up to £25m and I encourage you to remind your constituents about this way to support the Ukrainian people.

The UK has committed £220 million of humanitarian assistance which will be used to save lives, protect vulnerable people inside Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. This support is in addition to a £174 million economic package for Ukraine, taking the UK's overall support for Ukraine during the current crisis to almost £400 million.

However, the Government recognises that some individuals and organisations have already worked hard within their communities to collect aid and wish to see those donations reach those in need as quickly as possible. In order to facilitate that, we have removed the requirement to complete unfamiliar customs paperwork.

Regulations laid before the house yesterday will mean goods designated as humanitarian aid will, with effect from 10 March 2022 [no longer need to complete electronic declarations](#) in order to leave the UK. Instead, they will only be required to do an oral or by conduct declaration and will not be required to supply any customs documentation. Some larger vehicles (such as HGVs) will still be required to use the Goods Vehicle Movement Service to move goods between Great Britain and the EU, although this will be waived for vehicles under 3.5 tonnes who are currently transporting humanitarian aid to support those affected by the events in Ukraine.

If you are being contacted by constituents, you can point them towards guidance on goods that are eligible for this new, simplified process which is available [here](#). I would ask that you encourage your constituents to review this prior to beginning aid journeys. It is important to note that some goods are excluded from this easement, for example medicines are not included in this measure to ensure exported medicines are obtained from the UK licenced supply chain for patient safety reasons, and to avoid undue pressure on UK retail supplies. It should be noted that food, however, is eligible for the easement.

As with any customs easement, there is a trade-off with the ability to enforce compliance. For this reason, a number of mitigations will be in place to minimise the risk of non-compliance (including existing controls on goods movements and the exclusion of dual use, prohibited and restricted goods from this easement) and we believe any risk is outweighed by the clear benefits of this easement. The easement will be in place for a limited time.

If there are any concerns from charities or your constituents, you might want to encourage them to contact the Export Support Service on 0300 303 8955 with questions relating to transporting humanitarian aid to Ukraine. The helpline is available every day from 8am to 10pm. Charities can also [contact our online support team](#).

[HMRC's Customs & International Trade Helpline](#) advisers are also available Monday to Friday 8am to 10pm, and 8am to 4pm at weekends, to help with questions about exporting, importing and the Goods Vehicle Movement Service. You can contact them on 0300 322 9434.

Finally, I have included a link to more information on what your constituents and local charities [can do to help](#) the people of Ukraine.

I hope that this is helpful in simplifying our processes to support those impacted by the conflict in Ukraine.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Frazer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

RT HON LUCY FRAZER QC MP