

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

12th November 2018

Jon Coatsworth,

RE: BAHRAIN (HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS).

Thank you for contacting me recently about human rights violations in Bahrain; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

I appreciate your concerns on this and I know that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are aware of the campaign correspondence you have sent me.

You may be interested to know that several key questions have already been tabled by colleagues and answered by the Minister.

I know that the British Government monitors events in Bahrain closely. Where there are concerns on specific issues, including prison conditions, the UK raises these with the Bahraini authorities. It also encourages those with concerns about treatment in detention to report these to the relevant human rights oversight bodies, and encourages those oversight bodies to carry out swift and thorough investigations into such claims.

I do believe, however, that it is right that the UK Government makes no apology for the partnership with Bahrain - our two countries share a close and lasting bond that dates back more than 200 years. This partnership is built on mutual interests, shared threats, and a desire to promote greater security and peace in the Gulf. I agree with you, however, that Bahrain certainly has more work to do on human rights. That is why it is one of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's *Human Rights Priority Countries*.

In my view, the best approach with human rights is to engage with governments and work with international partners and civil society organisations to promote and defend universal freedoms, and bring about positive change.

I am encouraged that the UK will continue to support Bahrain to address human rights concerns, both through bilateral engagement and through international institutions. However, it is right to acknowledge and welcome the steps that Bahrain is taking to address a range of rights issues.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE