



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

5th March 2021

New Conflict;

RE: YEMEN

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the crisis in Yemen; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I share your concerns regarding the crisis in Yemen and the plight of the Yemeni people who are caught up in the conflict, and I know Ministers do too. I am proud that the UK is leading the international effort to respond to the crisis in Yemen through both our humanitarian response and diplomatic influence.

Since the conflict began, the UK has committed over £1 billion of humanitarian funding, which has helped meet the immediate food needs of millions of Yemenis, treated thousands of children for malnutrition and provided over one million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation; and such support will continue for as long as is necessary.

The UK has been at the forefront of international diplomatic efforts to bring a peaceful solution to the appalling conflict in Yemen, fully supporting the UN Secretary-General and the UN Special Envoy's peace plan. The Prime Minister discussed Yemen with the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman last September, and British officials have continued to engage with all parties concerned since. This has been done bilaterally and via the UN Security Council, where the UK has used its role as a penholder to move the peace process forward and ensure that Yemen continues to be a top priority for the international community.

I also fully appreciate your concerns about military exports to Saudi Arabia. I want to reassure you that in accordance with the Court of Appeal's judgment in June 2019, the Secretary of State for International Trade has now retaken licensing decisions regarding military exports to Saudi Arabia for possible use in the conflict in Yemen on the correct legal basis.

Export licences are not granted when there is a clear risk that the equipment might be used in the commission of a serious violation of International Humanitarian Law. Quite rightly, the protection of civilians is the cornerstone of International Humanitarian Law.

Indeed, I have been assured that each application is carefully assessed against the *Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria* and that a licence will not be granted if to do so would be a breach of the criteria.

The UK's long-standing position on Yemen is that there is no military solution to this conflict, and only a political settlement can bring long-term stability to Yemen and tackle the worsening humanitarian crisis. I have been assured that the UK is not a party to the military conflict as part of the Saudi-led coalition.



Finally, I welcome the move by President Biden to review US foreign policy towards Yemen. I am told that our Ambassador in Washington has already met with the new US Envoy, and I know that the UK will continue to engage with the US and other UN allies in order to bring about a viable solution to the crisis.

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*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**