



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
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Caroline Lucas MP
House of Commons
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Your ref: ML.N0046.CM.28.3.22
31 March 2022

Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your correspondence of 28 March to the Foreign Secretary about the forthcoming Pledging Conference on Supporting the Humanitarian Response in Afghanistan. I am replying as the Minister of State for South Asia.

As you know, on 31 March, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, together with the Governments of the United Kingdom, Germany and Qatar will convene a Pledging Conference on Supporting the Humanitarian Response in Afghanistan. It will be held virtually at Ministerial level.

The Conference will focus on raising resources to scale up essential humanitarian support to address the unprecedented level of humanitarian needs in Afghanistan, highlight the capacity and commitment of humanitarian partners to implement lifesaving assistance across the country, and raise awareness of other challenges critical to the survival of Afghanistan's people. We will ensure that the needs and voices of the Afghan people are fully reflected, especially women and girls, by inviting Afghan civil society to participate and attend the Conference.

We know and understand the scale of the humanitarian need is immense and increasing. The UK will continue to be at the forefront of the humanitarian response in Afghanistan. In August, the Prime Minister announced that the UK would double its assistance for Afghanistan to £286 million for financial year 2021/2022. This will support over 6.1 million people in Afghanistan and the region, providing emergency food, health, shelter, water and protection. Since April, we have disbursed over £261 million and we are working at pace to allocate the remaining funding in response to the developing crisis and the UN Appeal.

Ahead of the Conference, UK pledged an additional £286 million of emergency aid for vital lifesaving assistance in Afghanistan. Pledges made at the conference will go towards the UN's biggest-ever appeal for a single country, launched in January, for \$4.4 billion in 2022 to help over 24.4 million Afghans needing urgent humanitarian help to survive. Funding will be channelled through trusted UN agencies and charities on the ground. In the context of delivering humanitarian aid, we must insist on respect for humanitarian principles, humanitarian access, and international humanitarian law, and guarantees for female aid workers. These requests apply to the Taliban and all parties to the conflict.

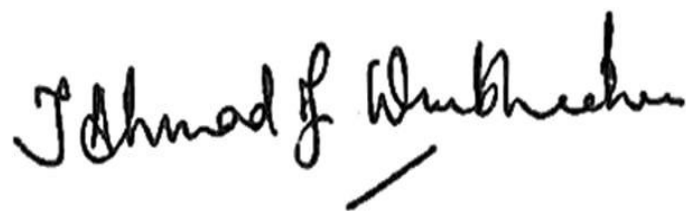
The UK has also taken a leading role in international discussions on how to support essential basic services. We are encouraging the World Bank and its shareholders to use the \$1.5 billion in the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund for this. We welcome the decision by the World Bank's Board on 30 November to transfer \$280 million to support the humanitarian response and basic health services via UN agencies. We are also working with G7 partners to encourage the World Bank to produce options to allocate the \$1.2 billion remaining in the Fund.

UK officials have been taking an influential role in the establishment of mechanisms to help ease Afghanistan's liquidity crisis. This includes co-leading a working group with the World Bank on Payment System Modalities for Humanitarian Aid Delivery in Afghanistan. This was a significant coordination meeting by the international community to find a resolution to Afghanistan's liquidity crisis.

Tackling this humanitarian challenge also requires a concerted and coordinated effort from the international community; and UN leadership is critical. This Conference will build on work that governments and organisations around the world are already doing to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. We will continue to work with international partners, including the International Financial Institutions, to find solutions to the humanitarian situation and economic risks to deliver on our commitments.

Thank you for your interest in supporting Afghanistan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON

Minister of State for South and Central Asia, North Africa, UN and the Commonwealth
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