



Foreign &
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Office

King Charles Street
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Caroline Lucas MP
House of Commons
London
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Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your email of 10 October 2014 to the Foreign Secretary following your meeting with the Sussex Kurdish Association. I am replying as Minister responsible for the Middle East.

The UK Government is horrified by the barbaric acts of the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) against the people of Iraq, including the Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, Christians, Yazidis and other minorities, and the humanitarian crisis they have brought about. As the Prime Minister said recently in Parliament, if they are left unchecked we risk a terrorist caliphate on the shores of the Mediterranean, and bordering a NATO member state, with a declared and proven intention to attack our country and our people.

Turkey is fulfilling an important role in the international effort against ISIL. We welcome Turkey's support, particularly its agreement for the unrestricted use of its airspace and Incirlik airbase to assist with humanitarian efforts in the region, which the Sussex Kurdish Association will now no doubt be aware of.

Recent events in and around the town of Kobane in northern Syria are a cause for particular concern. The UK is not involved in military action in Syria, but other members of the US-led coalition have undertaken airstrikes to protect Kobane. We support their efforts, and UK officials have been in touch with those representing Kurdish groups inside Kobane to understand the situation on the ground. In response to the numbers of displaced Syrians from Kobane, our humanitarian support has been concentrated on the people entering Suruc on the Turkish border. DFID has to date provided 8,300 mattresses and are also considering proposals to fund 500 tents and winter kits, including warm blankets.

Yours sincerely,

TOBIAS ELLWOOD MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State