



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

December 2016

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the situation in Aleppo. I am appalled by the entirely preventable humanitarian catastrophe taking place in eastern Aleppo.

As you know, the last functioning hospital has now been put out of action. Humanitarian access has been deliberately blocked by the regime and its allies including Russia for five months now, leading to the 275,000 civilians in eastern Aleppo facing imminent starvation. Across the rest of Syria, there has been almost no progress in delivering the UN humanitarian plan for November. The latest UN plan to deliver humanitarian aid was agreed by armed opposition groups recently, but the regime is still blocking it. This is just the latest of many failed efforts.

We need an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian access. All those involved in the siege and assault on Aleppo have a responsibility to change course to protect civilians. The Foreign Secretary could not have been clearer about this in discussions with Russia.

Ministers have been absolutely clear to Russia and to the Regime that using food as a weapon of war is a war crime, as is attacking civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and schools. We supported a UN Security Council motion to refer these matters to the International Criminal Court. This was vetoed by Russia. However, the UK and others continue to collect the necessary evidence to hold to account those who are perpetrating the damage and causing these atrocities.

The Government is ready to engage fully in discussions and offer whatever support it can in the quest for a political settlement, working in partnership with the international community, including Russia. We need to maintain



international pressure to that end. That is why the Government is supporting the recent EU effort to extend 28 new sanctions designations against the regime.

I would like to assure you that the Government continues to work with key partners to look at every option to alleviate the suffering of millions of Syrians, especially those in Aleppo.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY