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Response to Yemen (Stop the War in Yemen campaign) - January 2017

Thank you for contacting me about the conflict in Yemen.

First of all, Yemen is not a “UK war”. No British forces are involved. However, the UK supports the Saudi-led campaign to restore the legitimate Government in Yemen. President Hadi and the coalition that has been created to support him has the backing of the UN, through resolution 2216, so the call to support President Hadi is a legitimate one.

However, I share the view of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that, ultimately, a political solution is the best way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and end the conflict. The suffering of the people of Yemen is deeply concerning, which is why making progress on peace talks is the top priority. The UN has drawn up a road map for ending the conflict, which outlines the security and political steps the parties must take and the UK is taking a central role in this.

Yemen is one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. That is why I am proud that the UK is the fourth largest aid donors to Yemen, committing £100 million to Yemen for 2016-17. UK aid is already making a difference – last year we helped more than 1.3 million Yemenis with food, medical supplies, water and emergency shelter.

I would like to stress that the UK has an important working relationship with our close ally Saudi Arabia, which enables us to have frank conversations and work together in stopping terrorist attacks from taking place. If we broke that relationship, the Gulf and, arguably, the region and the UK could easily become a more dangerous place.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP