



# Joint Committee on Human Rights

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From Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP, Chair

**Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP**

Leader of the House of Commons

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

26 March 2020

Dear Jacob,

The Joint Committee on Human Rights has identified a number of very important human rights issues arising from the Coronavirus Bill. I am sure you will be well aware of them. And no doubt further human rights issues which are not yet evident will arise as the pandemic progresses and these measures are implemented in practice. We want the Government and all the relevant agencies to have all the powers they need to protect as many people as possible from this deadly virus. But we want our committee to be able to continue to scrutinise the human rights situation while parliament is no longer sitting, which might be for a prolonged period.

I understand that discussions are underway to agree a way to enable select committees to work remotely. As you will know, the Joint Committee on Human Rights, as a joint committee, is able to work remotely as we operate under Lords precedent.

But our concern is that we need to be able to continue our work whatever the status of parliament during this period.

Could you please arrange for whatever standing order or other method is necessary to enable the Joint Committee on Human Rights to remain constituted and able to carry out our work whatever the status of Parliament.

Yours sincerely

**Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP**  
**Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights**