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Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February about UK aid in Myanmar.

We condemn the coup in Myanmar in the strongest possible terms and we stand with the people of Myanmar who were clear at the elections in November that they want a democratic future.

Immediately after the coup I commissioned an urgent review of UK aid in Myanmar. We have now suspended all support involving the Myanmar government directly or indirectly unless there are exceptional humanitarian reasons. Support for government led reforms has been stopped and planned programmes will close. Our remaining programmes will focus on reaching the poorest and most vulnerable in Myanmar. We are in the process of determining the future size of the aid programme.

The safety and security of FCDO staff in Myanmar and the staff of our implementing partners is of the greatest importance to us. We have procedures in place to ensure that all FCDO staff, including our locally engaged staff, are able to fulfil their duties safely. We are also in close contact with our implementing partners to ensure that they prioritise this.

Humanitarian access has long been challenging in Rakhine State. We are working in close collaboration with our partners to track humanitarian access and improve the issuance of the necessary government travel authorisations to operate there. We raised concerns regularly with the previous government and we will continue to lobby to improve humanitarian access for people in need.

Yours sincerely,

THE RT HON DOMINIC RAAB MP