



HOUSE OF LORDS

House of Lords
London
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The Rt. Hon. Dominic Raab MP Secretary of State for Foreign,
Commonwealth and Development Affairs

15 September 2021

Dear Dominic,

We are writing to you as Chairs of the International Relations and Defence Select Committee and the Communications and Digital Select Committee.

The safety of Afghan journalists is of great concern to both our committees. You will have seen the disturbing reports of the Taliban detaining and beating journalists. We have both been contacted by journalists who fear for their lives and those of their families.

We welcome your decision to issue visa waivers for those who have worked with the British press. However, many others will be in equally great danger. The Taliban is unlikely to discriminate between journalists who have been critical of them in the British press and those who have done so through other outlets.

The UK's work through the Media Freedom Coalition over the last two years has been welcome. However, the fact that the Government's website still lists Afghanistan as one of 48 fellow members of that group is a reminder of how much has changed and how quickly.

We urge you to do all you can to provide Afghan journalists with a path to settlement in the UK. To make a generous offer to these journalists and their families would not only be the right thing to do; it would send a message to journalists across the world that the UK supports their right to express themselves freely and without fear. We would be grateful for details of any plans you have to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Anelay of St Johns
Chair of the International Relations and Defence Committee

Lord Gilbert of Panteg
Chair of the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee