



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State for South Asia and the
Commonwealth
Prime Minister's Special
Representative on Preventing Sexual
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Iain Stewart MP
House of Commons
London
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Our ref: MC2021/20761
Your ref:

07 September 2021

Dear Iain Stewart,

Thank you for your correspondence of 7 September 2021 regarding Pen Farthing and the staff working for Nowzad. I am replying as the Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth.

As stated publicly, we recognise the work of Pen Farthing and his staff. They have shown courage and resilience and have relieved the suffering of many animals. Pen Farthing and his pets were assisted through the system at Kabul airport by our Armed Forces and, on the direction of the Defence Secretary, clearance for their charter flight was sponsored by the UK Government.

During the evacuation process the Government's top priority has been to do all we can to deliver on our obligations to British Nationals, eligible Afghan staff and their families who worked directly for the UK, and vulnerable Afghans. We continue to provide advice to Afghan nationals eligible or approved for assistance under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) or those at serious risk who may be eligible to come to the UK under the new Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)

We are working with international partners to secure safe passage for those who wish to leave Afghanistan. The complex picture on the ground will present significant challenges to delivery, but the Government is working at speed to address these obstacles. We will continue to do all we can to help those Afghans who have supported us, and to put pressure on the Taliban to allow safe passage. We will also ensure that this does not compromise our national security. Those arriving in the UK will have to pass the same strict security checks as those resettled through other schemes.

The Home Secretary has announced the new Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme that will offer those Afghans most at risk a route to the United Kingdom – prioritising women, children and other groups at particular risk. Further information will be made available by the Home Office in due course.

I can assure you that the UK Government is committed to doing all we can to support the Afghan people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name "Ahmad".

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON
Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth
Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict