



THE BARONESS COX
HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON SW1A 0PW
caroline.cox@hart-uk.org

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

21 January 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

The UN Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures, Professor Alena Douhan, appealed at the end of December for the United States to lift its complex web of economic sanctions that severely harm the people of Syria – sanctions that have not been approved by the UN Security Council.

The Special Rapporteur stated that U.S. sanctions “violate the human rights of the Syrian people” and “exacerbate the already dire humanitarian situation in Syria, especially in the course of COVID-19 pandemic,” by blocking the aid, trade and investment necessary for Syria’s health system and economy to function. The Special Rapporteur’s findings reflect a growing consensus within humanitarian aid and human rights communities that this form of collective punishment of the civilian population is driving Syria into an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

Ten years ago, Syria was a breadbasket for the region. Today it is on the verge not just of hunger, but starvation, according to the World Food Programme (WFP). Last June, WFP’s Director, David Beasley, warned that half of all Syrians were going to bed hungry and that the country was on the brink of “mass starvation.” Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic is raging across the country, unhindered by a healthcare system largely destroyed after ten years of war.

Millions of hard-pressed Syrians will go to bed hungry and cold tonight. Unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States make the economic plight of the Syrian people worse.

Ten years ago, the UK, as a member of the EU, aligned itself with the United States’ Syrian regime change policy. Broad economic sector sanctions were imposed in a coordinated action. Since then the UK has broadened steadily its own sanctions regime, and has cooperated with the execution of the United States’ extrajudicial, extraterritorial secondary sanctions.

This month, consequent upon leaving the EU, the UK, rather than taking the opportunity to change a failed policy, chose to realign itself with EU sanctions on Syria via the full entry into force of the Syria (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This policy has not only failed in its intentions, but has exacerbated the suffering of the Syrian people.

We urge you to help Syrians to alleviate a humanitarian crisis, which causes profound suffering to the civilian population and threatens a new wave of instability in the Middle East, by:

- 1) Endorsing the UN Special Rapporteur's recommendation;
- 2) Terminating the UK's own economic-sector sanctions against the Syrian people;
- 3) Protecting UK citizens and institutions from the coercion of the United States' extraterritorial and extrajudicial secondary sanctions.

We believe that the national interests of the United Kingdom can be pursued without using economic sanctions to collectively punish the people of Syria.

Yours sincerely,



Baroness Cox

Lord Green of Deddington, British Ambassador to Syria 1991-94

Peter Ford, British Ambassador to Syria 2003-06

Lord Dannatt, Chief of General Staff of the British Army 2006-09

Lord West of Spithead, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff 2002-06

Major General John Holmes, Director of Special Forces 1999-2001

Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury 2003-12

Lord Carey of Clifton, Archbishop of Canterbury 1991-2002

Lord Alton of Liverpool

Lord Cormack

Lord Hylton

Lord Alderdice

Lord Judd

Lord Ramsbotham

Dr Christopher Cocksworth, Lord Bishop of Coventry

Dr Michael Langrish, Bishop of Exeter 2000-13

Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester 1994-2009; President of OXTRAD

Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP, Former Global Master of the Dominican Order

Dr Michel Abs, General Secretary, Middle East Council of Churches

His Holiness Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

His Beatitude Ignatius Youssef III Younan, Syriac Catholic Patriarch of Antioch and all the East

His Beatitude Youssef Absi, Melkite Catholic Patriarch of Antioch and All the East
H.E. Antoine Audo SJ, Chaldean Catholic Bishop of Aleppo
Bishop Joseph Arnaoutian, Armenian Patriarchal Exarch of Damascus
Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart, Melkite Archbishop of Aleppo
Revd Ibrahim Nseir, Pastor of Presbyterian Church in Aleppo
Revd Haroutune Selimian, President of Armenian Evangelical Church in Syria
Fr Elias Zahlawi, Melkite Priest of Church of Our Lady, Damascus
Dr Nabil Antaki, Leader of the Blue Marists in Aleppo
Revd Hans-Martin Gloël, Evangelical Church of Germany
Revd Ernst Herbert, Oecumenical Committee for Religious Liberty
Most Revd Vitus Huonder, former Bishop of Chur, Switzerland
Revd Albert Pataky, President, Pentecostal Church of Hungary
Dr Vilmos Fischl, Secretary-General, Ecumenical Council of Churches of Hungary
Most Revd András Veres, Bishop of Győr and President of the Hungarian Bishop's Conference
Revd Professor Michael Schneider SJ, St Georgen-College, Frankfurt am Main
Revd Fr Benedict Kiely, Founder, nasorean.org
José Bustani, Brazilian Ambassador to the UK 2003-08; Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons 1997-2002
Pierre Cuipers, French Senator
Thierry Mariani MEP
Gérard Bapt, former Member of the French National Assembly
Mezri Haddad, Tunisian Ambassador to UNESCO 2009-11
Dr Ridha Kechrid, former Tunisian Minister of Health and Ambassador to Spain
Michel Raimbaud, former French Ambassador to Mauritania, Sudan and Zimbabwe
Philippe Marini, Mayor of Compiègne and former President of the France-Syria Parliamentary Group of the Senate
Jean-Pierre Vial, French Senator 1995-97; 1999-2020
Christiane Kammermann, former French Senator
Mohamed Karboul, former Tunisian Ambassador
Professor Dr med. Karl Lehner, Rosenheim
Professor Dr Michel Veuthey, Associate Professor of International Law, Webster University
Dr Adel Ben Youssef, University Professor and Historian in Tunisia
Dr Joy Gordon, Loyola University, Chicago
Dr Erica Hunter, Senior Lecturer in Eastern Christianity at SOAS 2005-20
Professor Dr Hans Otto Seitschek, Ludwig-Maximilians-University
Professor Emeritus, Edmond Jouve, Paris University
Professor Dr Franz Hamburger, Johannes Gutenberg-University
Dr Audrey Wells, Research Associate, Royal Holloway College
Dr med. Antoine Salloum, President, Soins Pour Tous in Paris
Dr John Eibner, International President, Christian Solidarity International (CSI)
Fr Peter Fuchs, Director, CSI-Germany
Paul Kurt, Chairman, International Society of Oriental Christians
Ken McDonald, President, Marist International Solidarity Foundation
Neville Kyrke-Smith, National Director, Aid to the Church in Need (UK)
Karine Bailly, President, Solidarite Chretiens d'Orient

Benjamin Blanchard, General Director, SOS Chretiens d'Orient
Charles de Meyer, President, SOS Chretiens d'Orient
Revd Dr Andrew Ashdown, Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust
Ricardo Loy, CEO, Manos Unidas
Clara Pardo, President, Manos Unidas
Jacques Hogard, Founder, Société d'Intelligence Economique
Didier Destramau, President, France-Syria Friendship Association
Ahmed Manai, President, Tunisian Institute for International Relations
Abdelmadjid Ait Saadi, Chairman, International Cultural Activities in Algeria
Dr Anas Chebib, President of France-Near East Association
Dr Maher Daoud, President, French-Syrian Medical Association
Dr Salem El-Hamid, President, German-Syrian Society
Dr Makram Houry-Machool, Director, EuroCSE
Mouna Mansour, President, Heart Without Borders
Clemens Graf von Mirbach-Harff, Secretary General, Malteser International
Françoise Parmentier, President, French Cultural Association
Ivana Borsotto, President, Federazione Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale
Volontario
François Ernenwein, President, Confrontations (Association d'intellectuels chrétiens)
Fr Hervé Legrand, Vice President, Confrontations
Dr Selma Cherif, Vice President Youth Business International, Tunisia
Dr Jorge Dias Ferreira, Main Representative of New Humanity to the UN
François Richard, Founder, Ar-Bed Conseil (Security)
Dr Sabine Kebir, weltnetz.tv
Daniel Lillis KHS, Director, Lillis International Government Relations Consultancy
Pierre le Corf, Humanitarian Aid Worker in Aleppo
Peter Osborne, Journalist