

**JEREMY QUIN MP**  
Member of Parliament for Horsham



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

19th December 2016

*Dear Constituent,*

**RE: PERSECUTION OF CHRITIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Thank you for contacting me about the persecution of Christians in the Middle East.

I understand your strength of feeling on this issue. Where freedom of religion or belief is under attack, other fundamental freedoms often face threat as well.

In order to expand its efforts to tackle religious persecution, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has established a new expert advisory group, increasing training to improve its religious literacy and using these insights to inform Government work in international bodies and individual countries. In January, the FCO also announced the £10.6 million Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy 2016/17 programme, which encourages strong bids for projects focused on promoting freedom of religion or belief.

I can assure you that the Government is motivated by deep concern for religious communities in the Middle East. Ministers have stressed the importance of guaranteeing religious freedom when working with the Lebanese Government and the new Government in Iraq. Additionally, the Government is prioritising reaching the most vulnerable people across Syria, including Christians and those who have suffered from the ongoing violence, with its extensive aid programme.

The Government continues to work with non-governmental organisations to seek improvements on the ground. I know that this has included funding groups such as Christian Solidarity Worldwide, an organisation that works to defend the freedom of religion or belief, both in the Middle East, and more widely.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

*Yours sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeremy Quin".