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29 January 2025

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Kim,

Thank you for your letters, in which you and your co-signatories raise the vital issue of sick and injured children in Gaza and the prospect of medical evacuations.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza is intolerable, and the impact of the conflict on children is particularly harrowing. Critical levels of need have continued to rise, compounded by the destruction of Gaza's healthcare system. That is why the Government led international calls for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, protection of civilians and a rapid increase of aid into Gaza. Thankfully, we have now seen the ceasefire agreement begin to move in the right direction, with the release of some hostages, including Emily Damari, and a critical surge in aid.

However, there is much that still needs to be done to ensure the ceasefire holds and to alleviate the suffering. The UK will continue to be at the forefront of these crucial efforts to break the cycle of violence and secure long-term peace in the Middle East. We continue to press Israel to ensure civilians receive timely, adequate and appropriate support, particularly those in need of urgent medical care and specialised treatment. For patients who need medical or surgical interventions not available in Gaza, we are urging Israel to establish safe passage. Israel must continue to do more to ensure aid reaches civilians in Gaza, and to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure. I spoke to Prime Minister Netanyahu recently to press these matters.

We are clear that critically sick and injured children cannot wait – they must receive adequate and appropriate medical care now. The UK is supporting provision of essential healthcare to Palestinian civilians inside Gaza, including through UK-MED field hospitals. We are also supporting the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Egyptian Ministry of Health to care for medically evacuated Palestinians in Egypt. This is part of the £112 million in aid we have announced for the Occupied Palestinian Territories so far, this financial year. This includes £41million for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), providing vital services to civilians in Gaza and the West Bank, and to Palestinians across the region, delivered through partner agencies.

We are constantly seeking ways to alleviate the suffering in Gaza, including ways to help those in need of urgent medical care and specialised treatment. Following my request, the Health Secretary and Home Secretary are considering advice from their departments on the Project Pure Hope proposal and further options for medical evacuations for imminent decision. I remain committed to doing everything in our power to help.

I have suggested that the Department for Health and Social Care reach out to you for a ministerial meeting to discuss these issues with you further.

Thank you, once again, for writing, and I would be grateful if you could share this response with the co-signatories of your initial letter.

All best wishes,

