



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

2nd July 2021

Dear The Rt Hon Dominic Raab

Re: Urgent Diplomatic Issue - Albert Douglas, British national detained in Dubai

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd of June 2021.

We have been authorised by the family of Albert Douglas to write on his behalf and welcome you to seek his direct authorisation if it is so required.

On the issue of consular assistance, we understand that Mr Douglas has still not been provided with his medication and that the facility where he is being held, is overrun with covid. The family are concerned that with his pre-existing heart condition, any exposure to covid, could result in severe illness or death.

The Douglas family has invested more than £850,000 in legal fees in the Emirates alone, with most lawyers retaining the funds but providing very little support. We understand this is a common issue with lawyers in the UAE and that appealing the sentence is, in any case, no longer legally possible. We are not requesting the UK intervene in the legal process as such, but that they resolve the matter diplomatically as has been done in other cases in the past. Other allied foreign governments have also been successful in resolving cases for their citizens in this manner. UAE diplomats and rulers have been well documented to have intervened in cases involving British nationals to secure their release. There is no true separation of powers in the UAE that prevents diplomats from intervening in the local legal process. Therefore, the UK is in a good position to encourage a solution for Mr Douglas.

On the matter of the FCO travel warnings, we reviewed the advice before making the recommendation for amendments. While the current advice outlines the law in relation to bounced cheques and other financially related crimes, it provides no insight into the core issues that result in the unfair detention of British citizens abroad.

The UAE has been highlighted for unfair trials, forced confessions, lengthy and unfair detentions, human rights violations, torture and even a death in custody. The English courts cite the reasons for denying extradition being "*unfair trials, discrimination and the real risk of human rights violations and torture*". This in itself, confirms the lack of due process in Dubai. The fact that a British citizen can be wrongfully accused of a crime, arrested, held without charge for lengthy periods of time, forced to confess and convicted without evidence then subsequently beaten or tortured, should warrant the FCO to issue a severe warning. We urge you and the FCO to include these additional warnings on the website. This, in our belief, will protect the lives and safety of our citizens and encourage the UAE to improve conditions in the future.

We thank you for confirming the UK's relationship with the UAE and that representations can be made to UAE counterparts in specific cases. We ask if you could confirm your commitment to assist Albert Douglas and engage with your counterparts in the UAE to bring this grandfather home.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Janet Whitaker, Co-Chair
Martin Docherty-Hughes, Co-Chair
Andy Slaughter MP, Vice Chair

On behalf of members and supporters of the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

cc. Felicity Buchan MP