



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State for the Foreign Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

Wednesday 8th May 2019

Dear Secretary of State,

A citizen and resident of Newport in Wales, Imam Sis, a young Kurdish man, is on an indefinite, non-alternating hunger strike and is currently on day 143. We understand the strike was initiated to protest the isolation of the Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan who has been imprisoned by Turkey since 1999.

Memed Aksoy, also of Newport, began his hunger strike on Saturday the 6th of April and joining Nahide Zengin, Ali Poyraz and Mehmet Sait Yilmaz in London who began their hunger strikes on 14 March 2019. Leyla Guven, an elected member of the Turkish Parliament, the first to go on hunger strike, is on day 184.


We are extremely concerned about their health and well-being, subsequent weight loss and rapidly deteriorating health condition. We are also extremely concerned that hundreds of Kurdish political prisoners incarcerated in Turkey are also on hunger strike. Seven have since committed suicide as a result.

We also note the reasons behind the hunger strike. Since being imprisoned in 1999 Abdullah Öcalan has often been held in solitary confinement. Other than a 10-minute visit from his brother on 12th January 2019, no family members have been allowed to visit since 2016 and no lawyers of their client have been able to have contact since 2011.

This is arguably in clear breach of the Turkish state's legal obligations. Turkey is a signatory to several International Human Rights Treaties such as *The International Bill of Human Rights*, *European Convention for the Protection for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment* and most importantly, as a member of Council of Europe, the *European Convention of Human Rights*.

We call upon yourself as UK Foreign Minister to apply both public and diplomatic pressure on Turkey to uphold its legal human rights obligations.

We also call upon the UK Government Foreign Office to write immediately to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture carries out its duties and obligations and immediately visits Imrali Prison to assess the conditions of Abdullah Öcalan. We also request that the UK's representatives in the Council of Europe to request the same from the CPT.



We believe the CPT's active dialogue with Turkey and its reliance on a 2016 report is simply not an adequate response to a growing crisis. A visit by CPT would not only help bring an end to the Hunger Strikes and the loss of the striker's precious lives, but help ease Kurdish people's concerns across the world and potentially re-ignite dialogue and the peace process.

Yours Sincerely,

Rt Hon Liz Saville Roberts MP
Jessica Morden MP
Hywel Williams MP
Jonathan Edwards MP
Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
Ben Lake MP
Dr David Drew MP
Chris Stephens MP
Martin Docherty-Hughes MP
George Howarth MP
Geraint Davies MP
Carolyn Harris MP
Stella Creasy MP
Jo Stevens MP
Tommy Sheppard MP
Tom Brake MP
Caroline Lucas MP
Emma Hardy MP
Stephen Gethins MP
Layla Moran MP
Drew Hendry MP
Alex Sobel MP
Ruth Jones MP
Stephen Morgan MP
Angus Brendan MacNeil MP

Ruth Cadbury MP
Kerry McCarthy MP
Kelvin Hopkins MP
Bambos Charalambous MP
Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP
John McNally MP
Adam Price AM
Delyth Jewell AM
Leanne Wood AM
Rhun ap Iorwerth AM
Sian Gwenllian AM
Dai Lloyd AM
Helen Mary Jones AM
Bethan Sayed AM
Llyr Gruffydd AM
Alun Davies AM
Hefin David AM
John Griffiths AM
David Rees AM
Vikki Howells AM
Joyce Watson AM
Jenny Rathbone AM
Jayne Bryant AM
Mick Antoniw AM
Mike Hedges AM