



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development

Harriett Baldwin MP
Minister of State

Lord Alton of Liverpool
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0AA

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13 July 2019

Dear Lord Alton :

Thank you for your email of 6 June regarding Eritrea.

I said on 11 July 2018 that Prime Minister Abiy and President Isaias had taken a momentous step towards building a lasting peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea. After 20 years of conflict, normalising relations is unlikely to be a smooth process. We continue to speak to both countries, encouraging continued efforts towards a peaceful future and looking at practical ways in which we can support this.

We condemn the use of extreme force against peaceful protestors and the deaths of protesters in Sudan. I set out the UK's grave concerns at the use of violence by the Sudanese authorities against civilians to the Sudanese Ambassador on 6 June. I do not share the view of President Isaias on international mediation efforts in Sudan. The UK continues to offer support for mediation, including through the African Union, along with consistent messaging on an end to violence and renewed inclusive negotiations leading to a civilian-led government. We also commend the decision of the AU's Peace and Security Council to suspend Sudan from participation in all AU activities until the effective establishment of a civilian-led transition authority.

Whilst we must recognise that development cooperation in Eritrea, including recent cooperation on road building, is important to support increasingly sustainable and formalised relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia, we are clear that the general human rights situation in Eritrea, including the terms of national service, remains a substantial concern. We have therefore been active within the EU to ensure safeguards are in place, including working with the UN to monitor working conditions and fair

