

**Brendan O'Hara MP**  
Argyll and Bute



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London  
SW1A 2AH

1 April 2020

Ref: BO5080

Dear Dominic,

I fully appreciate how busy you are at the moment but as Chair of the APPG on Human Rights and Democracy in the Gulf, I wanted to draw your attention to the case of the estimated 1500 Bahraini nationals who are currently trapped in Iran; one of whom is the father of a dual British-Bahraini citizen who brought the matter to my attention.

As of last week, five of those people had sadly died and I would very much appreciate if the United Kingdom could exercise its diplomatic influence with both Iran and Bahrain to secure these individuals' safe return to their country.

The Bahraini government seems to have little intention of repatriating these citizens, indeed, Bahrain's Parliament [voted](#) against returning said citizens in a non-legislative decision taken on 8th March, and an evacuation set to take place on 23rd March did not [occur](#). The British-Bahraini citizen who contacted me is very concerned for the safety of her elderly father, as Iran is one of the principal [hotspots](#) of the COVID-19 pandemic and has struggled to contain the spread of the virus. Her family is only one amongst hundreds who are living in a state of fear for the lives of their loved ones unable to return from Iran.

The global crisis surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic could be an opportunity for the UK to demonstrate diplomatic leadership and secure the safe repatriation of those Bahraini people affected by this crisis. Given that the lack of a meaningful diplomatic relationship between Bahrain and Iran is endangering the lives of more than a thousand Bahraini citizens, could the UK consider using its alliance with Bahrain to take on a mediating role in order to bring a speedy end to this affair, while urging the Bahraini government to take immediate action to help these at-risk Bahraini citizens.

As chair of the APPG on Human Rights and Democracy in the Gulf, I ask that you make representations to the government of Bahrain in order to secure the safe return of all Bahraini citizens from Iran.

Your sincerely

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brendan O'Hara', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Argyll and Bute