



Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

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Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
King Charles Street,
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19 December 2018

Dear Alistair,

Thank you for your letter providing additional information requested during our oral evidence session on Wednesday 20 November 2018.

We understand from reports in the media that an independent assessor will be appointed to evaluate the level of redress and the number of victims of Libyan-sponsored IRA terrorism that could potentially qualify for compensation. We would be grateful if you could write to the Committee outlining the details of this appointment and the expected timeframe.

I would like to express the Committee's reservations about the Department's stated rationale for not pursuing direct government-to-government negotiations on behalf of the victims. It appears that the main obstacle is an assessment that the victims have not exhausted "all legal remedies" available in Libya. This is an untenable policy position considering the current political situation in Libya. Your own evidence to this Committee, outlining progress at the Palermo conference, demonstrates the chaotic and unstable nature of governance arrangements in Libya today.

I would ask that you clarify how individual victims can be expected to pursue effective "legal remedies" in the context of a state which does not have a functioning government.

Finally, your response of 11 December 2018 also raised concern amongst Committee Members about the status of the frozen Libyan assets. Consequently, I have written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer seeking further information on the UK tax liability of these assets and to clarify whether HM Treasury has ever used its powers to grant licenses for access to the assets, or the interest or dividends thereon.

*Yours ever,
Andrew*

Dr Andrew Murrison MP
Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee