

December 2018

Tom Tugendhat MBE MP  
Chair  
Foreign Affairs Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Secretary of State

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your letter of 4 December on behalf of the Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the humanitarian situation of migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

BiH has experienced an unprecedented volume of migrants over the past twelve months, which the local and State level authorities were not prepared to manage. The British Embassy in Sarajevo and the British Embassy in Zagreb have been actively involved from the outset in working with host governments, international organisations and charities to help resolve problems and alleviate the humanitarian consequences.

In November, British Embassy staff from both Sarajevo and Zagreb joined the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for a visit to Una-Sana Canton. They met local officials and visited reception centres for migrants managed by IOM. Our Embassy in Zagreb has also been assiduous in working with international institutions to investigate alleged abuses by Croatian border police against migrants.

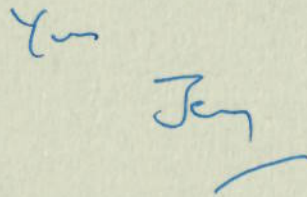
Unfortunately, the political context in BiH makes efforts to improve the situation particularly difficult. The BiH State level Government established a coordination mechanism in the spring. However, coordination between government institutions at various levels in BiH has not been adequate; elections in October and the continuing process of government formation have made this even more challenging.

Alongside the EU, the United States and other international partners, we are actively encouraging BiH to accelerate the formation of governments, thereby improving coordination of the BiH Government's response to the deteriorating situation for migrants on the ground.

On the humanitarian side, the UK Government is working in close co-ordination with international organisations to support BiH to manage the increased volume of migrants, including through providing £500,000 through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). This funding is being used to support communities and authorities in Una-Sana Canton hosting migrants and refugees. The project, implemented by IOM, supports local authorities' efforts to ensure improved delivery of goods and services, to both migrants and the local population in Una-Sana Canton.

Specifically, it supports improvements to municipal services in Bihac and Cazin, including street lighting, sanitation and the repair of public spaces used by migrants.

More widely, the UK remains a significant contributor to EU programmes to support BiH to tackle the increasing numbers of migrants and alleviate their conditions. The EU has pledged over €9.2m to BiH, comprising €2m in emergency response and €7.2m in mid-term response. The emergency response provides humanitarian aid including food, water, emergency shelter, sanitation, healthcare and warm clothing. The EU, IOM, UNHCR and other UN agencies have joined forces in opening new reception centers in Bihac, Cazin and near Sarajevo. British staff visited some of these centres in November. The EU's €7.2m mid-term response will strengthen BiH's migration management capacities and provide improved accommodation and basic services as well as education.

Handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jer' with a horizontal line underneath.

**THE RT HON JEREMY HUNT MP**