



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development

15 April 2020

Your reference: KJ15864

Our reference: MC2020/03969

Rt Hon. Kevan Jones MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Kevan,

Thank you for your letter of 25 March the Foreign Secretary, on behalf of your constituents, about flights cancelled due to coronavirus crisis. I am replying as the Minister for Asia.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against all non-essential international travel and also advises all British nationals who live in the UK and are travelling overseas to return to the UK now while commercial options are available. We advise that your constituents contact their airline, travel company, cruise line or other transport, insurance and accommodation providers to see how they can assist.

We have put in place a range of measures to assist travellers return to the UK, including working closely with local authorities, commercial airlines and other diplomatic missions to enable British nationals to get home. Our consular team is working around the clock to provide support, advice and information. This includes working extremely closely with airlines to ensure that they keep flight costs affordable so British nationals are able to return home safely and quickly. If people are struggling to afford the ticket prices, emergency loans will be available.

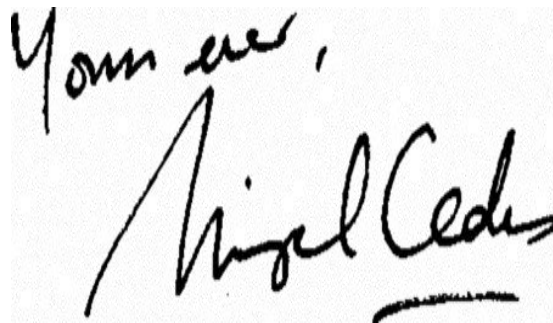
The best source of advice and information for British people overseas is in the FCO's travel advice: coronavirus specific and country specific. We are updating these pages frequently to ensure all British people have access to timely, relevant information during the current global travel disruption. Our travel advice is constantly updated to reflect the changing situation. You may wish to encourage your constituents to subscribe to travel advice email alerts for their destination, and continue to monitor the FCO coronavirus travel advice page. We also recommend your constituents follow their nearest Embassy or Consulate on social media.

If British travellers want to get directly in touch with the FCO, contact details to reach Embassies and, high commissions and consulates are found here. The UK number is 020 7008 1500.

I want to highlight that if a member of the public has tried to get in contact with FCO, or has raised further concerns with you after contact with FCO, colleagues in the House of Commons can email Covid.MPEnquiries@fco.gov.uk. You can also call the MP hotline on 020 7008 0999 if the issue is urgent and you need a rapid response. We have boosted the capacity of the hotline. We now have a dedicated team taking your calls so you can get through as fast as possible. The dedicated line is staffed 0830-1830 (weekdays) and 0900-1700 (weekends). The line is now handling 100% of calls received, and since 26 March has handled over 600 calls.

You raised the use of the Armed Forces in your letter. As ever, the RAF remain on standby to support where necessary. Some UK nationals have already been brought home via existing RAF routes, such as from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the FCO is thankful for this support. The scale of the challenge means commercial airlines complemented by charters where needed is the most effective way to bring UK home, but we can and will call on RAF support when needed.

Rest assured that my team and I are doing everything we can at this difficult time to support the British people.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light background. The signature reads "Yours ever," followed by "Nigel Adams" in a cursive script. There is a horizontal line under the name "Adams".

Nigel Adams MP
Minister of State for Asia