



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs  
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
King Charles Street  
London  
SW1A 2AH

Our Ref: BC67255

29 January 2026

Dear Yvette,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Kurdish community which represent a significant part of my constituency, on the extremely concerning and deteriorating situation in north-eastern Syria.

Over the last few weeks, the Kurdish community have been subjected to violent attacks by the Syrian Government forces under the leadership of President Al-Sharaa, forces which also include many units linked to Islamist terrorist groups such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham.

These attacks, which were mainly concentrated in Kurdish-majority neighbourhoods of Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafiyah in Aleppo, left 23 people killed and over 148,000 people internally displaced. Since the 17th January, the Kurdish town of Kobane has also been under siege from the Syrian Army, cutting off food, medicine and fuel and leaving six children dead after freezing from harsh winter conditions.

There are now concerns that Syrian Government forces, supported by jihadist groups and by Turkey, are moving into the Autonomous Region of Rojava. This threatens the autonomous status of the Kurdish-majority region and the wider security of the communities. Turkey's influence and involvement is concerning due to long-standing attacks on Kurdish rights and systemic marginalisation. There are fears that Al-Sharaa with Turkish backing will continue unimpeded in attacking the Kurdish community in Syria.

These latest attacks add to the already difficult humanitarian crisis that has overwhelmed Syria for more than a decade and threatens the security and stability of minority groups in the country.

Kurdish communities in Syria have long faced systemic marginalisation under decades of dictatorship under the Assad family and these recent developments have further heightened risks to the protection of civilians, regional stability and the transition to an inclusive political settlement in Syria in the post-Assad era.

Crucially, the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have been a key partner to the UK, US and international coalition against ISIS. The SDF were vital to halting the territorial expansion sought by ISIS and in the aftermath have been responsible for detaining thousands of ISIS terrorist fighters and family members, controlling many ISIS camps.

The UK must not abandon our partners who sacrificed over 15,000 Kurdish lives, to stand beside us in the fight against ISIS for many years. Despite their crucial role, these communities continue to be subjected to violence, displacement and collective punishment, with extremely limited accountability for those responsible. We must advocate for and ensure the civilian protection of Kurds in Syria and their full inclusion in the political space with full rights.

After a US-brokered agreement and due to ongoing attacks from Government forces, the withdrawal of the Syrian Democratic Forces from the Kurdish-majority areas has not only left the community vulnerable to further attacks and marginalisation but has also placed great risk on the ISIS detainee camps, which are now under the control of the Syrian Government. These detainee camps must be a central focus of ensuring security and stability not only for Syria but the wider region and Europe as well, as we cannot risk extremist resurgence and the escape of detainees to regroup.

Therefore, I urge the Government to:

- Call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and military de-escalation
- Use all diplomatic efforts to ensure the protection of Kurds and other minority communities in Syria
- Make representations with Syrian counterparts to support full and unhindered humanitarian access to Kurdish-majority areas, including food, medicine, fuel and basic services
- Work with the US and our international partners, including the SDF in ensuring the security of the ISIS detainee camps and contain the re-mobilisation of ISIS
- Advocate for the constitutional recognition of Kurdish identity, language, and local governance
- Call for accountability and independent monitoring of human rights violations

The protection of the Kurdish community and other minorities in Syria is crucial for a fair and sustainable political settlement which is inclusive of all Syrians and ensures the long-term stability and growth of the country.

The UK must work with allies and call upon the Syrian Government for further de-escalation and the protection and rights of Kurds, who have been bravely by our side for many years.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bambos". The script is cursive and fluid.

Bambos Charalambous MP