

Mr Andrew Boff AM
Chair of the London Assembly
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16 March 2022

Dear Andrew Boff AM,

Thank you for your letter of 8 March to the Home Secretary about the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Your letter has been passed to the Direct Communications Unit for a response on behalf of the Home Secretary.

The whole country is united in horror at Putin's grotesque war and is standing with the Ukrainian people. The images we are seeing on our screens and the reports we are reading are incredibly distressing. Nothing could be more depraved and disgusting than bombing a children's hospital – and yet that is only one of the innumerable evils that have been visited upon Ukraine.

In stark contrast, President Zelensky and the people he serves are being truly heroic. And the UK will not walk by on the other side.

The UK Government has imposed unprecedented economic and diplomatic sanctions as well as providing military equipment and training. We will continue to take every responsible action we possibly can. Putin must fail in Ukraine.

Our humanitarian response has been developed in close consultation with the government of Ukraine. We have a generous humanitarian scheme for Ukrainian nationals with family in the UK and on 4 March, the Home Secretary launched the Ukraine Family Scheme. This is for the following relatives of British nationals and people settled in the UK: spouses, civil partners, durable partners, children of any age, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, cousins, and in-laws.

Ukrainians joining the scheme will be granted the right to stay in the UK for three years, during which time they can work and access public services. People will need to pass security checks, which is essential to our national security.

Further information on the visa process for Ukrainian family members who wish to come to the UK can be found [here](#):

[https://www.gov.uk/guidance/support-for-family-members-of-british-nationals-in-ukraine-and-ukrainian-nationals-in-ukraine-and-the-uk#non-british-family-members-of-british-nationals-in-ukraine.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/support-for-family-members-of-british-nationals-in-ukraine-and-ukrainian-nationals-in-ukraine-and-the-uk#non-british-family-members-of-british-nationals-in-ukraine)

We will also help Ukrainians who do not have family here through the new Homes for Ukraine scheme. It will match Ukrainians with no family here with individuals, businesses, community organisations, or local authorities who are willing and able to act as their sponsor.

The Home Office and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) are working closely with the UN Refugee Agency and other organisations in Ukraine, so that displaced Ukrainians are aware of this offer and know how to apply.

The DLUHC will also work closely with the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to promote this scheme.

We are setting no limit on the numbers of people who can come here. We will be glad to welcome as many Ukrainians as wish to come, for whom we can find sponsors.

We will start this scheme and provide further details as soon as we possibly can. The UK has a long, proud history of helping people in need, and we hope that we are flooded with offers from potential sponsors.

Our generous humanitarian approach builds on our proud record of welcoming 20,000 Afghan nationals, 97,000 BNOs from Hong Kong, and 20,000 Syrian nationals under resettlement schemes.

This crisis, like the Afghanistan crisis that came before it, underlines the importance of reform of our immigration system, so that we have the capacity to welcome refugees swiftly and in large numbers, and can focus our efforts on people in genuine need. We will do everything we can to support Ukrainians, continuing this country's proud history of being a place of sanctuary and of standing for freedom and democracy and against barbarism and tyranny.

Yours sincerely,

Khaleed Edoo
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