



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

Tuesday, 5 August 2014

Dear Sayeeda,

Thank you for your letter today, in which you set out your reasons for resigning from the Government. I was sorry to receive this.

I realise that this must not have been an easy decision for you to make and very much regret that we were not able to speak about your decision beforehand.

I understand your strength of feeling on the current crisis in the Middle East – the situation in Gaza is intolerable. Our policy has always been consistently clear: we support a negotiated two state solution as the only way to resolve this conflict once and for all and to allow Israelis and Palestinians to live safely in peace.

Of course, we believe that Israel has the right to defend itself. But we have consistently made clear our grave concerns about the heavy toll of civilian casualties and have called on Israel to exercise restraint, and to find ways to bring this fighting to an end.

As part of that, we have consistently called for an immediate and unconditional humanitarian ceasefire.

More widely, I would like to take this opportunity to let you know how grateful I am for the contribution you have made to the Conservative Front Bench, both in Opposition and in Government, over seven years' continuous service.

As the Minister for Faith and Communities, working with Eric Pickles in the Department for Communities and Local Government, you played an important role in the Government's integration agenda – building more united communities, tackling hate crime, harnessing the power of faith groups and championing Britain's common heritage.

At the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, your hard work in tackling persecution around the world, between faiths and within faiths, has had a lasting impact, as has your work to put the UK at the heart of the global Islamic Finance system.

You can also take pride in how you have built relationships with the countries and leaders of Central Asia, and particularly the role you have played supporting democracy and women's rights in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Perhaps most importantly, I would like you to know how much I have personally appreciated your support and friendship over the years, and your commitment to our Party and the Government. You were one of the early supporters of my leadership campaign in 2005, something for which I remain grateful.

We have been through a great deal together since then and I will never forget how proud we both were when, in May 2010, you joined the Cabinet as Chairman of the Conservative Party.

You can take pride in your achievements in Government and, especially, for being the first Muslim woman in any British Cabinet. I appreciate your assurance of support in the months and years to come and I hope that you will always feel able to raise any issue with me at any time.

This comes with my thanks, and best wishes for the future.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David".

The Rt Hon The Baroness Warsi