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Minister of State for
Europe and the Americas

March 2017

HE Elisabeth Hayek-Weinmann
Embassy of El Salvador
8 Dorset Square
London
NW1 6PU

Your Excellency,

Thank you for your letter of 21 February, following up on some of the issues we discussed when we met in November.

I understand Baroness Anelay enjoyed her visit to El Salvador in December, where she was able to discuss priorities such as prison conditions, women's rights and economic and trade interests directly with your government. I agree with you that it was a very fruitful visit.

One of the key issues she covered was El Salvador's law on abortion; the update you provided on the proposal by the Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly and other Salvadoran parliamentarians to reform certain aspects of the law was very welcome. As you know, I am concerned that the current law does not provide opportunities to protect the health of expectant mothers but instead makes all abortions illegal. My officials tell me that there are still women who have suffered miscarriages who remain at risk of being sentenced to over thirty years in prison, which is deeply troubling. This is a topic of international interest which damages El Salvador's reputation and is attracting most unwelcome publicity for El Salvador.

I very much hope that the reform is adopted. Our countries have many shared interests in protecting the rights of women, and I look forward to building on those foundations in the future.

[REDACTED]

*Out
of
Scope*

*Yr sincerely
Alan Duncan*

RT HON SIR ALAN DUNCAN MP