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The Rt. Hon. Elizabeth Truss M.P.

Secretary of State

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

King Charles Street

LONDON

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Dear Liz.

Tuesday 8th March 2022

The work of the F.C.D.O. in facilitating support for Ukraine through British Charities and Trained Medical Practitioners.

I am writing to you as a member of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee and following widespread public interest, support from N.G.O.s and healthcare professionals about how they can help the people of Ukraine. There has been great interest in how these groups can work with the government to deliver care and support for Ukraine, and I wanted to bring this matter to your attention.

As you will already know the crisis in Ukraine has reached astronomical proportions, with approximately 13,000 people killed and two million people displaced. The Russian Government appears to be continuing their onslaught against Kharkiv and Kiev, which is only set to worsen the problem.

The humanitarian toll is already catastrophic, and these figures do not take into account the effect that war will have on the mental health of millions of Ukrainians caught up in the conflict. Families will be suffering from loss, listening to the news, spending days on end in bunkers and settling into temporary accommodation in foreign countries.

I understand that the U.K. Government is providing aid worth £220 million to the people of Ukraine, including medical supplies, basic necessities, and lethal and non-lethal military aid to the defending military of Ukraine. I applaud your department for its rapid response in delivering aid and support to the people of Ukraine, and I have no doubt that your department's measures are going to save a lot of lives.

However, there are many people across the U.K. with technical skills that are looking to offer their direct assistance to the people of Ukraine. I am writing to ask what provisions your department is making to help individuals and charities help the people of Ukraine.

You may have been made aware of three-year-old Polina from Kharkiv who is suffering from Neuroblastoma – an incredibly rare type of childhood cancer. Polina's family are currently facing a lot of difficulties trying to get treatment for their daughter, but due to the war, are struggling to get access.

I have recently received a communication from a charity, Mitchell's Miracles, which is one of the leading Neuroblastoma charities in the U.K., asking how they can offer their support to people like Polina who are affected by the conflict. I understand that these charities have specialist technical knowledge that gives them a unique advantage in offering treatment and support for people suffering from these rare illnesses.

Additionally, I have also received communication from a group of mental health specialists and psychiatrists offering their services in volunteer mental health support to the Ukrainians. Again, this is an instance where highly qualified individuals could make a real difference to the crisis in Ukraine, at no cost to the U.K. taxpayer.

Therefore, I would like to ask what steps your department is making to work with individuals and charities who want to volunteer their support for Ukraine. There are so many people who are willing to offer their support, and I would like to be able to put them in touch with people at the F.C.D.O. who would be able to direct them as to the appropriate pathways to supporting Ukraine.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the points that I have made, on behalf of the people of Romford and I hope that this letter will help enable some people to support the Ukrainians.

With every good wish.

Yours ever,

Andrew