Red Line for Yemen – MP letter writing guide

How to write a letter to your MP

Find your MP’s name and contact details at http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/. Enter your school’s postcode, constituency or MP’s name. Write to the MP of the constituency where your school is located.

Your MP may receive over 100 letters and emails every day. Therefore keep your letter short (no longer than one side). Write a brief introduction, make two or three key points and conclude by asking your MP to urge Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt to push for an immediate ceasefire in Yemen and stop the export of weapons from the UK to Saudi Arabia.

If you have practised persuasive writing in English, include some persuasive language and phrases in your letter.

Handwrite your letter. This gives it a more personal touch. Write neatly and make sure your spelling and grammar are accurate. Be prepared to write a second draft to get it completely right.

Format your letter accurately. Write your name and school address in the top right hand corner of the page. Directly underneath and on the left of the page write your MP’s name and constituency address in full. Address your MP as; ‘Jane Jones MP’. Then write your letter underneath leaving a blank line between paragraphs. Sign off your letter ‘Yours sincerely’.

Tell Oxfam when your school receives a reply from your MP by emailing education@oxfam.org.uk

Points to include in your Yemen letter

Decide which two or three points are most important to include. Here are some facts, figures and requests to select from;

- Air strikes in Yemen are destroying food and water systems. 81% of the population (22.2 million out of 27.4 million) is in need of humanitarian assistance.
- 8,757 civilians have been killed or injured since the conflict escalated in March 2015 – the majority of them in Saudi-led airstrikes.
- Some 3 million people were still displaced by the conflict in September 2017.
- 11.3 million people are in acute need of humanitarian aid or protection. Some 8.4 million are severely food insecure and at risk of starvation.
- The conflict is taking a terrible toll on children. 1.8 million children need nutrition assistance.
- Saudi Arabia is leading the bombing campaign in Yemen, in coalition with nine other countries.
- All sides in the conflict are accused of harming civilians, but according to the UN the majority of civilian casualties have been caused by attacks by the Saudi-led coalition.
- The UK has exported £3.3bn worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia since 2015.
- The Arms Trade Treaty clearly states that weapons sales should be stopped where there is a risk of International Humanitarian Law being broken.
- The UK should do all it can to demand an immediate ceasefire to end the suffering in Yemen.
- The attack on Hudaydah port in June 2018 threatened food and essential supplies for 20 million Yemenis and placed 600,000 civilians in the direct line of attack.

Statistics from OCHA (2018) and Oxfam (2018)
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