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**Iraqi Kurdistan Human Rights:**

I want to see the UK Government continue to press the case for improvements in the human rights situation in the KRI, in particular the conviction and sentencing of journalists and other political activists.

I know that Reporters Without Borders, among other organisations, is concerned by its observations of a surge in press freedom violations in the KRI. I am aware of the case of Sherwan Sherwani who has recently been sentenced to four years, following the six years to which he was sentenced previously and after this was cut to three years. I will continue to follow developments in this case.

The UK Government states that it supports a strong relationship with the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Federal Government of Iraq and that it wants to see a strong and successful Kurdistan region within a thriving Iraq. I share these aims and want to see a good relationship and successful cooperation between these two Governments, as well as with the UK.

I hope the UK Government will continue to engage with the KGR, emphasising the importance human rights within a strong and successful KRI, and raising issues about restrictions on freedom of expression.

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