



Ministry of
JUSTICE

The Rt Hon Jack Straw MP
Lord Chancellor and
Secretary of State for Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

T 020 3334 3720
F 020 3334 3669
E general.queries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

www.justice.gov.uk

Lord Hannay of Chiswick
Chair, UN Association of the UK
3 Whitehall Court
London
SW1A 2LE

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GENOCIDE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL CRIMES

Thank you for your letter of 29 May about the UK law relating to genocide and other international crimes. I am sorry you have not had an earlier reply.

I wanted to thank you for your support for our efforts to tackle this sort of serious crime. As you know, we remain of the view that the best option is for suspects who are accused of genocide or serious international crimes to be tried in the country where the crimes took place. That allows the victims and their families to see justice being done. However, we know there are circumstances where that will not be possible. We therefore need to consider our position in those circumstances.

But a change in the law will not be straightforward or simple. Lord Bach said on 5 May that he had met the all-party group on genocide prevention, and they made a very powerful case for the inclusion of genocide as an extra-territorial offence within British law. As Lord Bach re-iterated when he met with Frances D'Souza on 17 June, we are giving this active consideration with other relevant colleagues. I will let you and Parliament know as soon as I can what conclusions have been reached.

I am copying this letter to recipients of yours and to Frances D'Souza.

JACK STRAW