

Tim Farron
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Party
Liberal Democrat Party Headquarters
8-10 Great George Street
London
SW1 3AE

11 May 2017

Dear Mr Farron,

I am writing in advance of the General Election on 8 June to ask you to set out your policies to address the root causes of poverty and the protection and promotion of human rights both in the UK and overseas.

War on Want is a registered charity, with over 90 organisational and trade union affiliates, and over 100,000 individual supporters in the UK. Our organisation was established in 1952 and is founded on principles of human rights, internationalism, justice and solidarity.

Our work includes promoting human rights (as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations and International Labour Organisation conventions and declarations) and, in particular, such human rights which contribute to the relief of global poverty. We work with partner organisations and social movements in the global South in the realisation of human rights.

Our supporters are particularly concerned about the deepening inequalities both in the UK and globally that create barriers to the fulfilment of fundamental human rights for far too many people, most notably those who are marginalised and living in poverty.

Our supporters believe that commitments to human rights at home and abroad must remain central to government policies especially in relation to Brexit, and that crucial principles such as social justice, equality and the eradication of poverty should be prioritised in forthcoming negotiations and policies moving forward.

If elected, we would like to ask how your government will commit to:

Prioritising and defending human rights protections in the UK as negotiations take place to withdraw from the EU. In particular:

- How will your government ensure that all new bilateral or multi-lateral trade deals put people and planet first and take forward commitments outlined in existing international human rights and environmental obligations, including the Paris Climate Agreement?
- How will your government implement 'right to work' obligations including those set out in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ensuring that everyone in the UK has the right to work without discrimination and to enjoy just, favourable and safe conditions at work?

- How will your government ensure migrant workers in the UK are protected in Brexit negotiations and are able to enjoy equal social and labour protections including protections recognised in relevant International Labour Organisation Conventions?
- How will your government guarantee the protection of hard won worker's rights, and recognition of the crucial role of Trade Unions in establishing and protecting workers rights in the UK?

Ensuring policies shaping Britain's role in the world are consistent with international human rights obligations, and prioritise addressing the root causes of poverty. In particular:

- Will your government commit to ending UK complicity with human rights abusing regimes by ending the exports of arms and repressive technologies where there is a risk of use for internal repression or human rights violations? For example, would your Government call for an immediate suspension of arms trading with Saudi Arabia and Israel?
- Will your government support the call for a binding international mechanism to hold corporations to account for any social, environmental and human rights abuses as result of their operations, and in their supply chains?
- How will your government seek to end UK complicity in the corporate plundering of natural resources in the global South for example through extractive mining operations? Will your Government consider putting in place strong legal and regulatory frameworks to hold companies accountable for their operations overseas?
- How will your government maintain spending commitments for overseas development and work to end unfair global tax practices? How will your Government ensure UK overseas aid prioritises addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality rather than strengthening trade opportunities? Will your Government end the private sector profiteering from overseas development and reduce the privatisation of overseas aid?

Thank you for your attention to our letter and we look forward to receiving any response, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions about our priorities or our work more broadly.

Yours sincerely,

Asad Rehman
Executive Director