



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

**Dog Meat Trade**

Thank you for contacting me about the dog meat trade in East and Southeast Asia.

I am proud that Britain is a nation of dog lovers. Like you I view the trade and consumption of dog meat as quite abhorrent, particularly where it involves cruelty to animals.

That is why I am relieved that while the Government recognises the need for sensitivity when dealing with countries where eating dog meat is culturally accepted, it has continued to try to influence those countries. There have often been accusations against countries in Asia of cruel treatment towards animals, and the Government has made clear that there can be no place for cruel or inhumane practices anywhere.

The then-Foreign Office Minister, James Duddridge MP, vowed during a House of Commons debate last year,

"We will continue to raise these important issues in the most effective way possible, which is not always through megaphone diplomacy, although sometimes speaking loudly is needed. Where it is needed, we are prepared to speak loudly."

His successor, Alok Sharma MP, recently described representations he made on the same subject to the South Korean ambassador. I am glad to know that the Government is speaking on behalf of the British people on this issue.

Ministers are working with charities operating in the region to encourage welfare improvements and encourage, and sometimes pay, dog farmers to seek other sources of income. An important part of the battle is to convince people to care about animal welfare and change their own behaviour. Thanks in large measure to these organisations' activism as well as the British Government's consistent influence, dog meat consumption is declining in several countries across the region.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

*Edward Timpson*

**Edward Timpson MP**

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