



## Commonwealth Secretary-General

11 June 2019

Dear Nick,

I write in response to the letter in which you and other Members of both Houses of the United Kingdom Parliament as members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global LGBT Rights express to me your concern about the implementation of the Sharia penal code in Brunei and ask that the matter be formally considered by the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), the next meeting of which is currently being scheduled.

I have been in communication with the Government of Brunei in relation to the implementation of the Sharia penal code both before and since 3 April, the date on which it came into force, and I issued a statement on 5 May which is available online at: <http://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/secretary-general-welcomes-brunei-death-penalty-moratorium>

I also met the Foreign Minister on 8 May as he passed through London on his way to Geneva, and stressed the importance of adherence to the Commonwealth Charter and international human rights law. I urged the Minister that Brunei should use its Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which was then imminent, to address *inter alia* the issue of ratification of the Convention Against Torture (CAT).

As you may be aware, on 10 May, during its UPR, Brunei stated that it is currently working towards ratification of the CAT. You will also no doubt have seen that among UPR recommendations received by Brunei are that it should “implement the Sharia Penal Code in a manner consistent with international human rights standards” and “consider acceding to the core international human rights instruments”. Brunei will give an indication of its responses to the UPR recommendations in September.

I thank you and your parliamentary colleagues for your continuing determination to build on Commonwealth connection and on the values and principles of the Commonwealth Charter towards a safer and more inclusive future for the people of all our member countries.

Very best wishes always

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC

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