

My intervention during the Urgent Question on UK Nationals Returning from Syria, 18 February 2019

John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con): How will the UK authorities go about finding the evidence concerning those UK citizens who went abroad to join a terrorist organisation and to fight or intervene in acts of brutality or support those who did?

Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr Sajid Javid): My right hon. Friend highlights an important issue. Members will understand why it is very difficult to gather evidence when someone has gone to a completely ungoverned space where we have no consular presence and no diplomatic relations of any type, and nor do our allies.

That said, we put a huge amount of effort—I take this opportunity to commend our security services, the police and some of our international partners—into gathering battlefield evidence and having that ready to use whenever appropriate. If we can supply that evidence in some cases to our partners for cases that they wish to bring in front of their courts, we will try to work constructively with them. The UN has also been looking at this. New measures are being considered on battlefield evidence conventions, and Britain, through the Ministry of Defence, is making an incredibly important contribution to that.