

NICK CLEGG

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS HEADQUARTERS | 8-10 GREAT GEORGE STREET | LONDON | SW1P 3AE

Natalie Samarasinghe
UNA-UK
3 Whitehall Court
London
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18th March 2015

Dear Natalie

Thank you for your letter of 4th March and for sending me the human rights petition signed by your supporters which calls on party leaders to champion human rights laws.

I absolutely agree – our universal human rights are extremely important and must be protected. As a party, the Liberal Democrats have proudly campaigned for human rights, both at home and abroad.

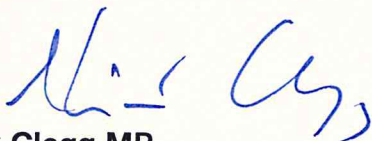
As you say, basic human rights for everybody should be independent of party political aims or goals. Contrary to what some politicians would have us believe, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act are not unwanted impositions on British people, but are in fact, British rights, drafted by British lawyers and fought for by Winston Churchill in the aftermath of the Second World War. I firmly believe that we should be proud of the leading role that Britain has played, and must continue to play, in the promotion and protection of human rights, both at home and worldwide.

That is why the Liberal Democrats have continued to deliver a focus on the promotion of individual human rights – whether it is through legislating for equal marriage as we have done in this government, or ensuring the UK's Human Rights Act isn't scrapped. Turning our backs on the long British tradition of upholding human rights across the world just isn't an option. It would, as you rightly point out, mean that we would no longer be able to occupy the moral high ground when it comes to dealing with dictators and others, if we do not abide by binding international human rights practises and conventions ourselves.

The Liberal Democrats are internationalists because we understand that by working together, countries can achieve more than they can alone. I can assure you that the party remains committed to championing human rights protections, upholding the values of individual and social justice, as well as stamping out all forms of discrimination or persecution based upon race, colour, religion, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to write to me about this very important issue.

With best wishes,



Nick Clegg MP
Leader of the Liberal Democrats

