[Name of MP]

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

[Date]

Dear [Name of MP],

RE: Supporting environmental defenders and tackling the causes of risk

On World Environment Day 2023, I think it is important that we recognise the vital work of the environmental defenders and communities protecting our planet, combating climate change, and preserving biodiversity. These courageous people play are crucial allies in the struggle to combat climate change, but often face immense challenges and risks.

Since 2012 over 1733 land and environmental rights defenders have been killed trying to protect our planet: an average of one defender killed approximately every two days. Land and environmental rights defenders also face imprisonment, criminalisation, intimidation, surveillance, sexual violence, and death threats against them and their families.

In 2019 the UK Government launched a policy to support human rights defenders, highlighting those working on environmental issues as some of the most threatened, and promising to take actions to protect them. But these efforts appear to be ineffective, and it is not clear what the Government has done to enhance this policy and improve its implementation through a comprehensive strategy and adequate budget.

A lot of environmental defenders face risks because they are standing up to destructive and irresponsible businesses, particularly those in the natural resource sector. I saw that, last week, the European Parliament approved legislation to make it mandatory for large companies to check for environmental and human rights abuses in their supply chains. Yet it seems that the UK Government would rather have an unlevel playing field than do likewise, despite the widespread support for such a law from businesses themselves.

Please can you tell me what you and your party are doing to support and protect environmental and human rights defenders, to effectively regulate business by making due diligence mandatory, and to demand the Government to more on both of these issues.

I would appreciate your response to this inquiry and encourage you to take action to ensure that the government engages, protects and supports environmental defenders, speaks out in support of their work, and legislates to reduce the harms of irresponsible business.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Address]