

## EMBARGO LIFTS 00:01 THURSDAY 27 JUNE 2019

This **Thursday 27 June, at noon**, a group of the international students who were wrongly accused of cheating on an English test by the Home Office in 2014 and denied the chance to prove their innocence will deliver a letter by hand to the Home Secretary, making a personal appeal for him to take urgent action to end this mammoth injustice.

The letter (see below) has been **signed by more than 80 of the students** who were wrongly stripped of their visas and their rights five years ago. (See attached briefing for more info on the issue.) Some of them will deliver the letter at noon on Thursday to **2 Marsham Street, SW1P 4DF**.

The Home Secretary Sajid Javid has said he is sympathetic to the issue and announced on 1 April that he had made final decisions on the next steps. In May, Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes said the Home Secretary would make a statement once a [National Audit Office report](#) on the matter was published. It's now been more than a month [since that report](#) and the Home Secretary has said nothing.

Frustrated by the delays and silence, the students are now making a direct appeal to the Secretary of State.

**Nazek Ramadan**, Director of Migrant Voice, a charity that is campaigning alongside the students for justice said:

*"These students live every day in growing despair. Stripped of their rights, many are destitute and suffering severe mental health problems. Many have contemplated or attempted suicide. The way the Home Office has treated tens of thousands of students on this issue makes a mockery of the British justice system – but the Home Secretary does have the power to put it right.*

*"We urge the Home Secretary: Listen to the students, make the right decision, and do not delay your announcement any longer."*

**Wahidur Rahman**, one of the signatories, said:

*"We have lost a precious five years of our lives. We had a plan to make a career, but instead of making a career we lost the way to establish our life.*

*"We have been expecting that the Home Secretary would make this statement, but the more he is taking time, the more it is painful for us to bear each day. Once he makes the statement, we will be able to know what our next step is. The sooner he makes the statement the better for all the innocent students."*

[LETTER STARTS]

*Dear Home Secretary Sajid Javid,*

*We are some of the tens of thousands of international students unjustly robbed of our visas and our rights by the Home Office in 2014 after we were accused of cheating on an English test. We are innocent but the government gave us no real way to defend ourselves, so we've been fighting for five years just to clear our names.*

*The Department you lead ruined our lives and stole our futures. It branded us as frauds, forcing us to bear a lifelong mark of shame, while never presenting any evidence at all against most of us.*

*Many of us are destitute, barely able to live from day to day. Many of us are on medication for stress or depression. Many of us have been rejected by our families, who are shamed by the allegation of cheating. Some of us have tried to kill ourselves.*

*Home Secretary, you have said you are sympathetic. Twice in the last three months we have been promised a statement from you about the Government's next steps, but you have chosen to keep silent. You were given a chance to defend your Department at the recent APPG hearings on this issue, but you did not come.*

*Home Secretary, you are our last hope and we need to hear from you. Please tell us what our futures will be. It is within your power to put this right.*

*Best wishes,*

**(Names will go here: See [our website](#) on Thursday for the full list of names)**

[LETTER ENDS]

**A group of the students will deliver the letter to the Home Office at 2 Marsham Street, SW1P 4DF at 12 noon on Thursday (27 June). Several of the students will be available for interview and photo opportunities at that time. Nazek Ramadan is also available for interview. Interviews can also be scheduled prior to Thursday – please contact [press@migrantvoice.org](mailto:press@migrantvoice.org) if this is of interest.**