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30 June 2025

Dear Shanta Sundarason,

Thank you for your letter of 4 June 2025 and of 12 June 2025 to the Prime Minister. Your correspondence has been passed to the Interpersonal Abuse Unit at the Home Office for a response.

We recognise the devastating impact sexual violence and trafficking for sexual exploitation can have. The Government expects every report of a sexual offence to be treated seriously from the point of disclosure, every victim to be treated with dignity and every investigation and prosecution to be conducted thoroughly and professionally.

While we would encourage every victim to report crimes committed against them, it is important to explain that the Government and its Ministers are unable to intervene in, or comment on, the circumstances of individual cases. We must stress that this is not because of a lack of concern, but because it is a fundamental principle of our criminal justice system that the police and courts are operationally independent of Government. The establishment of an inquiry requires careful consideration, particularly where there may be related criminal or other ongoing official proceedings taking place.

You may wish to note that violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a top priority for this Government, and it is being treated as a national emergency. The Government's mission is to halve the levels of these crimes within a decade, using every lever available. To achieve this, we must overhaul every aspect of society's response to these devastating crimes. This means reforming the police response, strengthening the criminal justice system, and empowering victims by providing access to specialist support when they need it. To help achieve this, we are also developing a new cross-Government VAWG strategy which will be published this year and set out the strategic direction and concrete actions to deliver on the Government's VAWG ambition.

Yours sincerely,

## **Interpersonal Abuse Unit (IAU)**