

### **Professor Lord David Alton of Liverpool: A statement of gratitude and appreciation**

People suffering oppression across the world, often silenced and ignored, have a real friend in Lord Alton.

A member of the House of Lords in the British Parliament, Lord Alton is probably the most hard-working campaigner for human rights and fighting for all those who are discriminated against, disenfranchised, abused and even killed.

Lord Alton recently won what must be the highest accolade – being sanctioned by the Chinese government for his continued protests about their notorious policies towards the Uighur Muslims.

In typical fashion, Lord Alton (together with the other politicians who were similarly sanctioned) promised to “redouble” his efforts to fight for the Uighur. He is renowned for his work on rights in Tibet, Myanmar and Rwanda, for which he was honoured by the Catholic Church.



Murambi Genocide Site – David Alton mourns the deaths of 1 million Tutsis whom the world failed to protect.

Lord Alton has been equally indefatigable in his pursuit of rights in the Horn of Africa. He was one of the first Parliamentarians to visit Sudan’s Darfur genocide in the early 2000s and been a voice for Sudanese in Parliament in the decades since. He has taken up the oppression of Eritreans, the war in Tigray and rights of Ethiopians, with a tenacity and energy that is hard to believe.

Lord Alton is the Vice-Chair of the APPG for Eritrea and has served in that role for several years raising awareness of the gross human rights abuses perpetrated by the Eritrean Government on its own people. David has taken a very active interest in Eritrea and its people – inside and outside of Parliament.



Opening Eritrea History Photo Exhibition - London, Sept. 2018

It would not be far from the truth to say that there has hardly been a week when he was not peppering British Ministers and the Foreign Office with questions and comments about the tragic situation confronting men and women trapped in the Tigray war. And he never fails to update the public on his work via his website - <https://www.davidalton.net> – truly modelling what an open and transparent Parliament means in practice.

Yet Lord Alton has next to no help in fighting for these causes. As a ‘cross-bench’ member of Britain’s upper house – the House of Lords – he is not aligned to any political party. This allows Lord Alton the freedom to pursue the causes he supports, but he is effectively on his own, though he would be the first to commend his colleagues and fellow fighters for human rights from both Houses.

### A brief biography

David Alton was born in London in 1951, in the working-class area of the city – the East End. His father fought in the Second World War, serving with the Eighth Army in North Africa, before going to work for Ford motors.

David won a scholarship to a Catholic church school and then studied to be a teacher in Liverpool. He was elected as a Liberal to the Liverpool City Council and was, at the time, Britain’s youngest city councillor.

In 1979 he was elected member of parliament for a Liverpool seat and went on to serve as MP for eighteen years. He stood down in 1997 and was made a life peer (or Lord). Since then, he has worked tirelessly on issues from North Korea to Eritrea.

We take this opportunity to recognise Lord Alton’s work and to simply say: “thank you” on behalf of us all.