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## STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE GRANTING OF DIPLOMATIC PROTECTION TO NAZANIN ZAGHARI-RATCLIFFE

“We salute the decision of Foreign Secretary Hunt to grant Nazanin diplomatic protection. This is an important step that has not been used in the UK in 150 years. We especially welcome the Foreign Secretary’s strong assertion that the move “demonstrates to the whole world that Nazanin is innocent”.

We hope the diplomatic protection - which means that her case will now be treated as a formal, legal dispute between Britain and Iran - will facilitate British embassy visits to our colleague Nazanin, who has been unjustly imprisoned for nearly three years, and help her finally receive the urgent medical care she is in need of outside Evin prison.

Nazanin has been unwell for years but, in the last six months, both her mental and physical health have been deteriorating rapidly with all manner of worrying symptoms. She has not been allowed to receive the medical assistance her doctors inside Evin prison say she requires, despite the promise made by the authorities during her three-day hunger strike in January.

We renew our plea for the Iranian authorities to release Nazanin as soon as possible. We know our colleague is innocent and we want her back in London with her husband Richard and daughter Gabriella. All of us at the Thomson Reuters Foundation have been awaiting her return for far too long.”

**Monique Villa – CEO, Thomson Reuters Foundation**