

Sir Lindsay Hoyle meets Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

The Speaker of the House of Commons told Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe that ‘the whole nation rejoiced’ when she was finally reunited with her family after six years in captivity.

Sir Lindsay Hoyle made the comments during a meeting with Nazanin, her husband Richard, and their daughter Gabriella in Speaker’s House with MP Tulip Siddiq, who led the campaign for the 43-year-old’s release.

‘The whole nation rejoiced when we saw you coming off that plane at RAF Brize Norton and finally being reunited with Richard and Gabriella,’ he said.

‘You have achieved something that many others before you have not – in uniting the House in their efforts and hope to get you home.’

Turning to Richard, who staged two hunger strikes to raise awareness of his wife’s plight, he added: ‘No-one can replicate what you did to bring Nazanin home, I can tell you.’

Nazanin said her five-days of freedom were hard to take in. She said: “It is too much to absorb.

“I sometimes ask myself: “Is it real? Or is it part of the nightmare/ dreams I was having for such a long time?”’

Holding an encaustic tile presented to the family by Sir Lindsay, Richard said: 'Six years ago we were just ordinary people – and here we are being given such a welcome by the Speaker.

"I think this piece of Parliament is a reminder to us of the work Parliament did for us.

"It takes a village in a case like ours. So many people have helped – some people we knew, some we didn't know. It embodies all that care in Parliament and all those people who badgered their MPs to do something.

"We will always have this tile on our mantelpiece as a reminder that we were not left alone."

During the meeting, Sir Lindsay presented seven-year-old Gabriella with a Speaker Bear fluffy toy, which she duly declared would be called 'Speechless'.

All photos courtesy of UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor







