



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

*New Contract,*

**RE: OVERSEAS AID**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of UK spending on overseas aid; your comments upon which I have read with great interest and compassion.

This country has been, and always will be, open, outward-looking, and leading in solving the world's toughest problems and striving to be a force for good in the world. Whether it's stepping up to support desperate Syrians and Yemenis in conflict zones, leading the way in eradicating Ebola and Malaria, or supporting millions of children to gain a decent education, I am proud that UK aid is keeping the UK safe, while helping the world's poorest stand on their own two feet.

Nevertheless, we must be honest about where we are. The UK is currently facing its worst economic contraction in 300 years because of the pandemic, and a budget deficit double that caused by the 2008 financial crisis. At this time of unprecedented crisis, tough choices must be made, which is why the Chancellor announced a temporary reduction in the UK's aid budget from 0.7 percent to 0.5 percent of the UK's Gross National Income (GNI).

It should be noted that the UK will still be spending more than £10 billion on fighting poverty, tackling climate change, supporting girls' education, resolving conflicts and improving global health. As one of the most generous aid donors in the G7, with a commitment considerably higher than the OECD average, and coupled with our expertise and convening power, the UK remains a development superpower.

The UK is, for example, the biggest bilateral donor to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the largest fund in the world dedicated to improving education in developing countries. Likewise, our contribution to the COVAX AMC is amongst the largest, and will support COVID-19 vaccines for up to 92 developing countries by contributing to the supply of 1.3 billion doses in 2021, and vaccinations for up to 650 million people.



I have been assured that the UK will return to 0.7 percent as soon as the fiscal situation allows. The Government has said that it will bring legislation before Parliament to authorise the cut, and thus give MPs a vote. Given the persisting economic circumstances, I remain supportive of the temporary cut and will vote accordingly when the time comes to do so. I believe the FCDO are still working through the implications of the reduction for individual programmes, and that final decisions are yet to be made. As such, I will gladly raise your concerns with Ministers.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*  
*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**