

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

*Dear Constance,*

**RE: UNICEF – ‘FUTURE AT RISK’ REPORT**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of UNICEF’s recently published ‘Future at Risk’ report; your comments upon which I have read with interest, and which I know my ministerial colleagues in the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office will reflect on with great care.

The report is correct to note that the pandemic is exerting severe pressure on essential and life-saving health services in many, particularly poor, countries around the world, which threatens to increase levels of maternal and child mortality - and thus global progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3. Unless decisive action is taken now, past progress towards this goal - as with many others, like education (SDG 4) - risks being erased altogether.

Ministers are proud that UNICEF notes that the UK has been at the forefront of global health agendas for decades, with an exceptional aid track record. I am confident that current and future development efforts will honour this reputation. In 2020, for instance, the UK pledged a total of £166 million dedicated to tackling food insecurity and to provide aid to more than 7 million vulnerable people in some of the world’s most dangerous places.

I appreciate the call for the UK to publish a plan for ending preventable deaths of mothers, new-born babies and children. Nevertheless, Ministers have been clear that the UK’s approach to this particular issue will be informed by the outcomes of the ‘Integrated Review’. Working from first principles in this way is the right approach in my view, thus, it is best to wait until the review has concluded before the UK commits itself to a detailed course of action on this issue.

The Government wholeheartedly agrees with the recommendation that the UK should aim to lead global efforts to build resilient health systems. The Prime Minister has already set out a five-point plan to strengthen health systems against global health crises, and committed to putting girls’ education and empowerment, including reproductive health, on the global agenda as part of our Presidency of the G7 this year.

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**