

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th June 2021

See Comment,

RE: BEST FOR BRITAIN CAMPAIGN ON INTERNATIONALISM.

Thank you for your recent correspondence and for sharing with me the recent report by Best for Britain titled 'A Truly Global UK'. I have read your comments with great interest.

I agree that isolationism is an unrealistic approach to foreign policy compared to international cooperation and I know that my ministerial colleagues at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) share this view.

Indeed, the 'Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development & Foreign Policy', which was published in March 2021, made clear that the UK has a seat in every major multilateral organisation – NATO, World Bank and IMF, OSCE, UN Human Rights Council in 2021-22, G7 (President 2021), the Commonwealth, the UN, P5 member of the UN Security Council, G20, and the Council of Europe – and is committed to using its prominent global position to work with like-minded allies to strengthen and sustain an international order in which open societies and economies can flourish.

The fact that the UK has been at the forefront of, and is one of the largest donors to the international response to the COVID-19 pandemic, shows beyond doubt that the UK's efforts overseas are defined by cooperation with others, for the benefit of all.

I appreciate your suggestion regarding the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) spending. Crises, such as that in which we currently find ourselves as a nation, demand tough choices. The decision to temporarily cut ODA spending from 0.7 to 0.5 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) is one of these. That said, the UK will still be spending £10 billion in ODA during 2021, and thus will remain one of the most generous donors in the world – well above the OECD donor average.

Additionally, I should also add that our contribution to the COVAX AMC is amongst the largest and will contribute to the supply of at least 1.3 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021, already reaching over 120 countries. Given where we are and the fact that COVID-19 impacts upon everyone the world-over - a global problem that directly affects people and businesses in this country and our day-to-day lives - I entirely support this particular common sense contribution.



Indeed, the UK continues to be a world leader in international development, not only as a result of our large financial commitments, but also through the creation of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), which integrates diplomacy and development to deliver greater impact worldwide. Furthermore, I am assured that the UK will return to spending 0.7 percent of GNI on ODA as soon as the economic circumstances allow, as set out in the 'Integrated Review'.

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**