



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

25th June 2021

Dear Constituent,

RE: OVERSEAS AID.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of UK spending on foreign aid, otherwise known as Official Development Assistance (ODA). I have read your comments on this issue with interest.

This country has been, and always will be, open and outward-looking, leading in solving the world's toughest problems and striving to be a force for good in the world, whether it is stepping up to support desperate Syrians and Yemenis in conflict zones, leading the fight against Ebola and Malaria, or supporting millions of children to gain a decent education.

Nevertheless, we must be honest about where we are. The UK is currently experiencing its worst economic contraction in 300 years because of the pandemic, with 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 ODA budget from 0.7 percent to 0.5 percent of the UK's Gross National Income (GNI).

However, the UK will still be spending more than £10 billion in 2021 on its seven ODA priorities, as set out by the Foreign Secretary - on climate change and biodiversity; global health security, including COVID-19; girls' education; responding to humanitarian crises, such as those in Yemen and Syria; science and technology; resolving conflicts and defending open societies, including human rights; and promoting trade.

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, the largest fund in the world dedicated to improving education in developing countries; and the World Bank International Development Association, which works to accelerate progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition, 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.



Ultimately, having raised your concerns with my ministerial colleagues, I have been assured that the UK will return to 0.7 percent as soon as the fiscal situation allows and I will monitor this closely as we emerge from the more severe effects of the pandemic. In the meantime, however, this country remains committed to playing its part internationally in the way you have advocated in your correspondence.

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 PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**