



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State for South Asia and
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Prime Minister's Special
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Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
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Our ref: MC2020/25531

17 December 2020

Dear George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 19 November on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED] about the reduction in the UK's aid budget.

As the Chancellor set out in his statement to Parliament on 25 November, the seismic impact of the pandemic on the UK economy has forced the Government to take tough but necessary decisions as we seek to protect jobs and the NHS. That includes temporarily reducing the amount we spend on official development assistance from 0.7% of our gross national income to 0.5%. It is the Government's intention to return to spending 0.7% as soon as the fiscal situation allows.

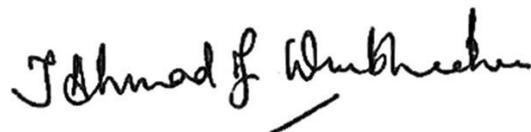
The UK remains firmly committed to helping the world's poorest people. Despite next year's adjustment, latest figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) confirm the UK will remain one of the most generous G7 aid donors as a percentage of GNI in 2021.

In real terms, this is likely to mean more than £10 billion to fight poverty and climate change, improve global health, support open societies, invest in scientific research and help to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

This is a significant investment. It is our duty to ensure every penny delivers maximum impact. The Foreign Secretary has announced reforms to make sure we deliver aid better, even if our budget is smaller, by combining aid with diplomacy. Ensuring a coherent approach across Government departments, and focusing our efforts where the UK can make a world-leading difference.

Doing so is more crucial than ever. As we recover from the pandemic and prepare to hold the G7 presidency and host COP26 next year, we must make our investment go as far as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON
Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth
Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict