



HM Treasury

1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Meg Hillier MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

22 December 2020
Your ref: MH61917

Dear Meg,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 1 December on behalf of your constituents, regarding international aid. The Treasury has received unprecedented amounts of correspondence since the start of the coronavirus outbreak in the UK. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has asked me to write to you directly.

The Government has listened with great respect to those who have argued passionately to retain this target. I would firstly like to reassure your constituents that the Government remains committed to international development and providing support to the world's poorest. The UK will remain one of the leading development donors in the world, providing £10 billion next financial year towards our key international development priorities including poverty reduction, climate change, and global health security.

However, we face extraordinary fiscal circumstances as a result of our unprecedented support to the economy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the Chancellor said in his Spending Review speech, at a time of emergency, sticking rigidly to spending 0.7 per cent of gross national income on overseas aid (Official Development Assistance) is not an appropriate prioritisation of resources. The Government intends to return to the 0.7 per cent target when the fiscal situation allows.

The Government will continue to spend overseas aid in the most focused and effective way possible, tackling key global challenges where the UK is already a well-recognised international leader, including in our international response to COVID-19.

Aid is also only one way we project Britain's place in the world – the UK uses these resources to support our wider leadership efforts on the world stage, which we will step up as we chair the G7 and the Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2021.

I hope this is helpful. If you have any questions about this reply, please email public.enquiries@hmtreasury.gov.uk quoting reference MC2020/44330.

Yours sincerely,

L Adams

Correspondence and Enquiry Unit
HM Treasury