

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Dear Constituent

Thank you for sharing with me the recent report by Best for Britain titled 'A Truly Global UK'.

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 and Development Office (FCDO) share this view.

Indeed, as the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, published 16 March, which set out the UK's foreign policy ambitions for the next decade, made clear: 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), Commonwealth, the UN, P5 member of the UN Security Council, G20, 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 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 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI) is one of these. The UK will still be spending £10 billion in ODA this 2021, and thus will remain one of the most generous donors in the world – well above the OECD donor average.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

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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 FCDO, which integrates diplomacy and development to deliver greater impact worldwide. I am assured that the UK will return to spending 0.7 per cent of GNI on ODA as soon as the economic circumstances allow, as set out in the Integrated Review.

Once again, thank you for contacting me, and if I can ever be of any assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely
Peter Gibson

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