



House of Commons
Foreign Affairs Committee

Previously Unpublished Memoranda Submitted to the Foreign Affairs Committee

Written evidence

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Foreign Affairs Committee

The Foreign Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the administration, expenditure and policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and its associated agencies.

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The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/foreign_affairs_committee.cfm.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Dr Robin James (Clerk), Ms Gosia McBride (Second Clerk), Mr Imran Shafi (Committee Specialist), Dr Brigid Fowler (Committee Specialist), Miss Elisabeth Partridge (Committee Assistant), Miss Jennifer Kelly (Secretary), Jane Lauder (Secretary), Miss Emma McIntosh (Chief Office Clerk), and Mr Alex Paterson (Media Officer).

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**Letter to the Parliamentary Relations Team, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
from the Clerk of the Committee**

ZIMBABWE

At their last meeting the Foreign Affairs Committee discussed an article which appeared in the *Sunday Times* on 11 November headed *Barclays bankrolls Mugabe's brutal regime*. I enclose a copy of the article (not printed).

The Committee would be grateful to receive a memorandum from the FCO commenting on the allegations made in this article, and giving the Government's view as to whether EU or UK sanctions against Zimbabwe have been breached.

Dr Robin James
Clerk of the Committee

26 November 2007

**Letter to the Clerk of the Committee from the Parliamentary Relations Team, Foreign
and Commonwealth Office**

ZIMBABWE

Your letter of 26 November asked the FCO to comment on the allegations made by the Sunday Times on 11 November about Barclays Bank in Zimbabwe and give the Government's view as to whether EU or UK sanctions against Zimbabwe have been breached.

We take seriously any allegation of a possible breach and will always investigate it to establish the facts. The activities of banks incorporated in Britain and operating in Zimbabwe are subject to Council Regulation (EC) 314/2004 concerning certain restrictive measures in respect of Zimbabwe (OJ 2004 L55/1). If there is a breach of any kind, we will act. We are determined to see that EU sanctions against Zimbabwe are properly enforced.

It is this Government's policy not to comment on individual cases, but I can confirm that to date there have been no cases where British banks have been found to be in breach of the prohibitions of the EU regulations. There are two principles that underpin any such investigation. First, EU regulations apply to EU companies and these companies must not themselves breach the prohibitions. Second, the same regulations apply to any EU subsidiary of the parent company.

In determining whether an overseas company is an EU subsidiary, the key consideration is where that subsidiary is incorporated. If it is in the UK or EU, it is considered an EU subsidiary. But if it is outside the UK, it is considered a non-EU subsidiary and not therefore subject to the EU regulations. Additionally, the fact that an EU company may hold a majority shareholding in a non-EU subsidiary does not make the subsidiary an EU company.

We are happy to discuss with the Committee any further questions on the application of EU sanctions against Zimbabwe.

Richard Cooke
Head
Parliamentary Relations Team

18 December 2007

**Letter to the Chairman of the Committee from the Secretary of State for
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs**

Thank you for your letter of 17 December concerning the FCO current Travel Advice for Sudan.

Lord Malloch-Brown, the FCO Minister for Africa, received a similar letter from the Secretary of the Sudan Volunteer Programme (SVP), to which he replied on 23 October. I wrote to the Rt Hon Sir Menzies Campbell on 19 November in response to a similar letter on behalf of one of his constituents.

We welcome the Sudan Volunteer Programme's efforts to provide English language training in Sudan, which can provide the basis for further development in the country. Mr Wolton has made clear his concern about the FCO travel advice for Sudan. There is no intention of being alarmist, and the FCO certainly does not wish to prevent people from volunteering in other countries. However, we consider it essential for people to make informed decisions about possible risks that they may be taking.

The FCO Travel Advice is designed to help British travellers make their own decisions about travelling abroad, and to help them to avoid trouble by providing information on threats to personal safety arising from political unrest, terrorist activities, lawlessness, violence, natural disasters, epidemics, anti-British demonstrations and aircraft/shipping safety.

FCO Travel Advice draws on a variety of sources including the local knowledge and experience of the FCO's overseas Posts and intelligence assessments. A team in the FCO collates the advice from our Posts worldwide.

The FCO Travel Advice for Sudan makes clear throughout that the situation in Sudan is not uniform and highlights specific areas where we advise that people do not travel for a variety of reasons including the security situation and natural disasters. It is regularly updated to take account of current events.

In July 2007, following feedback from British travellers and tour operators, we introduced four generic threat descriptors, intended to clarify the scale of the terrorist threat to the travelling public. Drawing from our experience of what our customers need from Travel Advice, we consider that these descriptions are the most helpful to the travelling public given the innate difficulty of describing the threat from terrorism. The descriptors, as agreed with the travel industry and other stakeholders are:

- "A high threat from terrorism" means a high level of known terrorist activity.
- "A general threat from terrorism" means some level of known terrorist activity.
- "An underlying threat from terrorism" means a low level of known terrorist activity.
- "A low threat from terrorism" means no or very limited known terrorist activity.

Whilst our Travel Advice reflects the best judgements we can make at the time, as we have seen in the UK, and elsewhere, it is possible for indiscriminate attacks to take place without prior warning. In recognition of this, our Travel Advice also consistently makes reference to the risk of indiscriminate terrorist attacks globally.

While every care is taken in preparing FCO Travel Advice, the FCO does not assume any legal responsibility to those who read the Travel Advice and who may choose to take it into account when making any decisions relating to a particular country. I hope that this clarifies the purpose of the FCO Travel Advice.

FCO Officials have also spoken to the SVP Secretary, Mr Wolton. They had contacted the British Council in Khartoum to see whether they could offer any recruitment advice: the British Council reported that they had similar problems recruiting teachers. Since we contacted the British Council, we have faced the high profile case of the arrest of the British teacher, Ms Gibbons. Given the circumstances of her arrest, we have since updated the section on "local laws and customs" in the travel advice to all Muslim countries. I hope that, notwithstanding this unfortunate case, Mr Wolton will be able to find teachers to work in Sudan.

Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

2 January 2008

**Letter to the Parliamentary Relations Team, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
from the Clerk of the Committee**

COMMONWEALTH

Mike Gapes has asked me to request a note on the Government's policy on moves to establish a Commonwealth Expert Group on policing. It would be helpful to receive this note by 8 October.

Mr Gapes also recalls that Lord Triesman briefed the Committee before CHOGM 2005. He hopes that it will be possible for Members of FAC to receive a similar briefing before CHOGM 2007.

Steve Priestley
Clerk of the Committee

19 September 2007

**Letter to the Clerk of the Committee from the Parliamentary Relations Team,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

COMMONWEALTH EXPERT GROUP ON POLICING

Thank you for your letter of 19 September. You asked for a note on the Government's policy on moves to establish a Commonwealth Expert Group on policing.

We are in favour of this idea, and hope that the idea of the Commonwealth building on its excellent work on policing will be taken up at the Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala in November. We are planning to raise the issue at a meeting of Commonwealth senior officials level this week. An Expert Group, or similar mechanism could be instrumental in, for example, developing a code of conduct for police throughout the Commonwealth, as well as helping those countries most in need with capacity building assistance.

It is worth noting the work which the Commonwealth has already carried out in this area. The Commonwealth Secretariat's Human Rights Training Programme for Police has been working with police trainers to allow human rights to become a natural part of regular police, and prison officer, training. The programme was pioneered in West Africa (Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Gambia and Sierra Leone) in 2005 and led to the publication of the Unit's Manual on *Human Rights Training for Police*, for Commonwealth-wide application in the training of police. A number of other countries have since benefited, with training for police trainers from Botswana, Cameroon, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia. In addition, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and Commonwealth Foundation have been working together on a two-year project to increase police accountability in Ghana.

Richard Cooke
Head
Parliamentary Relations Team

8 October 2007

**Letter to the Chairman of the Committee from the Secretary of State for
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs**

I am delighted to enclose a copy of the Government's response¹ to the Committee's report on the *Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty* (21 January 2008).²

I welcome the Committee's conclusion that the "*the Common Foreign and Security Policy will remain an intergovernmental area, driven by the Member States*". As I, and ministerial colleagues have long argued, this was a key objective for the Government in the negotiations and one of the reasons why we have no hesitation in recommending the Treaty for UK ratification.

I also welcome the Committee's assessment that "*the new post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy has the potential to give the EU a more streamlined international presence and to contribute to the more coherent development and implementation of external policy*". Your analysis of the European External Action Service is similar. Both assessments strike at the heart of why the reforms are necessary—to get the EU to move on from institutional navel-gazing and enhance its ability to deliver on the issues that matter to people, not least global peace and security.

I look forward to debating these important issues, as well as the issues raised by the Committee, on 19 February when we discuss CFSP issues during the Committee stage of the EU (Amendment) Bill.

Rt Hon David Milliband MP
Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

15 February 2008

¹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Government Response to the Foreign Affairs Committee Report on 'Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty'*, Cm 7332, February 2008.

² Foreign Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session 2007–08, *Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty*, HC 120-I/II.

Letter to the Chairman of the Committee from the Embassy of Romania

I am pleased to let you know that the Romanian Parliament ratified the Lisbon Treaty, on the 4th of February 2008, in a plenary meeting of both Chambers. The Ratification bill was adopted with an overwhelming majority of votes (387 votes in favour, one vote against and one abstention). Romania has thus become the fourth EU Member State to ratify the Treaty, after Hungary, Slovenia and Malta.

This is a moment of great significance for Romania's EU membership, the Lisbon Treaty being the first European Treaty that we signed as an EU member state.

Romania has been a strong supporter of the new Treaty, being confident that it will help consolidate our European cooperation. We are looking forward to the successful completion of the Treaty ratification process in all Member States, in view of its timely entering into force, on the 1st of January 2009.

Mihai Delcea
Chargé d'Affaires a.i

5 February 2008

Letter to Simon McDonald, Foreign Policy Adviser, 10 Downing Street from the Chairman of the Committee

Congratulations on your appointment as the new Prime Minister's foreign policy adviser. You will face many important challenges over the coming months, but I know my colleagues on the Committee agree with me that you are more than capable of dealing with them.

The Committee noted with interest Gordon Brown's statement at his campaign launch on 11 May that "Government must be more open and more accountable to Parliament—for example in decisions about peace and war, in public appointments. . .". I and my colleagues feel it would be entirely within the spirit of the new Prime Minister's remarks if you were to appear before it in public session to explain your role as his foreign policy adviser and to answer questions on the new Prime Minister's foreign policy priorities.

I look forward to your response.

Mike Gapes MP
Chairman

27 June 2007

Letter to the Chairman of the Committee from the Parliamentary Clerk, 10 Downing Street

Thank you for your letter of 27 June, inviting Mr Simon McDonald to give evidence to the Committee on the Prime Minister's foreign policy priorities.

I regret that Mr McDonald must decline the invitation. The Prime Minister will be appearing before the Liaison Committee in the autumn, and will be happy to answer questions personally then.

I understand that the Foreign Secretary and the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Sir Peter Ricketts) will be available to give evidence to the Committee as necessary.

26 July 2007

**Letter to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee from the Minister of State,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

GIFTING OF FACILITIES TO THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT

As Parliament is in recess and will not be able to consider the attached gifting minute for the required 14 working days, I am writing to you to request approval for the gifting to the Government of Iraq of:

- A custody suite for the Basra Department of Internal Affairs—Basra's anti-corruption Police unit;
- A refurbished building in the centre of Basra to provide a Forensic Laboratory for the Police Forensics unit.

Although the projects were endorsed in principle by the Consul General and General Officer Commanding in Basra in early June, we have only recently been able to obtain reliable cost estimates for the projects. As a result we have not been able to submit a minute to Parliament before recess in the usual way.

We judge that we cannot afford to delay the gifting of these items to the Government of Iraq until October when Parliament returns. Our Policing Assistance mission in Basra is likely to reduce in the coming months with the reposturing of British Forces out of the city ahead of transfer to Provincial Iraqi Control. We should like to proceed with this and the gifting as soon as possible in order to ensure that our police mentors can effectively oversee the projects and to allow time for us to train and mentor the Iraqis who would be utilising the facilities. Approval of the proposed gifting is required before the work can commence.

Both projects are designed to contribute to HMG objectives in Basra to strengthen the capacity of the Iraqi police and thus the rule of law. Full details are provided in the attached minute.

The Treasury has approved the proposal in principle. If, during the period of fourteen days (exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays) beginning on the date on which this Minute was laid before the House of Commons, you signify an objection, final approval of the gift will be withheld pending an examination of the objection.

I am copying this letter and the accompanying Parliamentary minute to Mike Gapes MP, Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee.

Dr Kim Howells MP
Minister of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

10 August 2007

DEPARTMENTAL MINUTE CONCERNING GIFTING FOR IRAQ POLICING PROJECTS

It is normal practice, when a government Department proposes to make a gift of a value exceeding £250,000, for the Department concerned to present to the House of Commons a Minute giving particulars of the gift and explaining the circumstances. The Department should refrain from making the gift until fourteen days (exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays) after the issue of the Minute, except in cases of special urgency.

The UK policing mission to Iraq has been providing assistance to the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) since May 2003. A team of UK officers conduct training, follow up mentoring, and encouragement of reform within the IPS, with the aim to create an effective, locally acceptable police force that respects Human Rights.

Two significant challenges facing the Basra Police are corruption and a lack of specialist capabilities. To this end we currently support the Basra Department of Internal Affairs, who are the only unit with a remit to target and arrest corrupt Police Officers. We also support the development of forensics capabilities within the Police service as it offers the opportunity to consider impartial scientific and physical evidence, thereby reducing the reliance on confessions.

As part of this support, we need to ensure that these units have adequate facilities to allow them to carry out their tasks. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office therefore proposes to provide a gift up to the value of £1.2 million for two projects.

The first is for a purpose built custody suite for the Department of Internal Affairs. Current facilities are inadequate, pose a risk to those in custody and limit the effectiveness of the unit. Funds totaling £400,000 will be used to build a new custody suite on Basra Air Station that meets recognised international standards. Risks to improper use of the facility will be managed through mentoring of Iraqi staff by our police and prisons mentors who have regular contact with their Iraqi counterparts.

The second is for the refurbishment of a building in the Basra Police Headquarters to an adequate standard so it can be used as a Forensics Laboratory. Funds totaling £800,000 will be used to conduct internal refurbishment covering structural integrity, electrics, communications and creation of scenes of crime laboratories. Exterior refurbishment will cover the construction of an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) facility and a vehicle storage and examination area. Equipment for the laboratories has already been supplied and is waiting to be installed. We will minimise the risk of misuse of the facility by maintaining our relationships with the Head of the forensics unit with whom we have been working for a number of years and through continued engagement with the senior police leadership.

The Treasury has approved the proposal in principle. If, during the period of fourteen days (exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays) beginning on the date on which this Minute was laid before the House of Commons, a Member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or of a Motion relating to the Minute, or by otherwise raising the matter in the House, final approval of the gift will be withheld pending an examination of the objection.

Letter to the Chairman of the Committee from the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH IRELAND

Following the successful restoration of devolution in Northern Ireland yesterday, I am pleased to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Ireland. This treaty reaffirms both Governments' commitment to protect, support and where appropriate implement the provisions of the Belfast Agreement, subject to the alterations to the operation of the institutions agreed at St Andrews.

As you may be aware, this Agreement was signed on 22 March and laid before Parliament as a Command Paper (Cm 7078) on 18 April in the wake of the 26 March breakthrough and Easter recess. Copies of the Agreement and its accompanying Explanatory Memorandum have already been distributed to members of your Committee.

As you know, the tenets of this Agreement have been considered by Parliament during the passage of the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006. Following the successful restoration of devolution to Northern Ireland on 8 May, I consider it appropriate in these circumstances to truncate the standard 21-day laying period under the Ponsonby Rule to ensure the Agreement can be brought into force as soon as possible. This will provide swift formal clarity to the agreed alterations to the arrangements and institutions established by the Belfast Agreement of 1998, and ensure a shared understanding of the St Andrews Agreement commitments across these islands. To that effect, notes of completion will therefore be exchanged today with the Irish Government.

I will make a Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament today explaining my reasons for truncating the Ponsonby laying period on this occasion, and I am writing in similar terms to the Northern Ireland Affairs and Public Accounts Committees.

Rt Hon Peter Hain MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

9 May 2007

**Letter to the Chairman of the Committee from the Minister of State,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS: INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR UK POLICE PERSONNEL

During the course of 2005 an FCO-led Strategic Taskforce on International Policing conducted a review of the UK's approach to policing in Peace Support Operations (PSOs). The task force consisted of Whitehall departments with an interest in international policing, together with ACPO, ACPOS, Chief Constables from a number of individual forces, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Association of Police Authorities.

One of the recommendations agreed by the then Foreign and Home Secretaries at the end of that process was the development of a written manual to underpin the UK's future policing contribution to PSOs. With this letter I am pleased to enclose the result of that recommendation: *Peace Support Operations: Information and Guidance for UK police personnel*. (not printed)

The handbook aims to provide practical and accessible guidance to UK police officers deploying to PSOs around the world. In addition to explaining why the UK makes a contribution to PSOs, it outlines, among other things, international policing principles, the legal context in which such missions operate, the kind of tasks UK officers might perform, and the standards of behaviour expected of them. The handbook will reinforce officers' pre-deployment training and act as an aide-memoire whilst on mission.

I hope that you will find it useful background on International Policing more generally. If you have any comments or feedback on the Guidelines or would like further information please do not hesitate to contact the International Secondments Team, Conflict Group, W3.115, FCO, King Charles Street.

Dr Kim Howells MP
Minister of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

20 June 2007

Letter to the Clerk of the Committee from the British Council

Further to my letter of 11 October regarding changes to our British Council operation in Russia, I am now writing to you again to update you on the latest developments. As we are all aware, the current political climate means that any news from Russia tends to attract considerable media interest, and British Council activity in Russia is certainly no exception. In light of this, I felt it was important to brief you personally on the ongoing implementation of our revised strategy in Russia.

As described in my previous correspondence, we decided to transfer our network of nine regional centres to local partners. This transfer is now underway and will be completed by end of December 2007. This is part of the British Council's long term global strategy to concentrate resources on programmes and on reaching a wider and greater number of people, reducing dependency on expensive and management intensive "bricks and mortar" based services.

In line with this, our information and library services in Moscow will also be transferred to partners, ensuring that the resources themselves are still accessible to customers. We are re-structuring our teams in Moscow to deliver our programmes efficiently across Russia through a more stream-lined way of working. These changes in Moscow will be completed by 31 January 2008. The focus on fewer, bigger projects and the move from physical to virtual and partner-led services (including administration of exams) is less resource demanding, and therefore this re-organisation will involve a reduction in staff numbers. We are very sorry to lose the staff affected by these changes but will be providing them with the maximum support possible, including compensation in full compliance with (and exceeding the minimum requirement of) Russian legislation.

The British Council remains committed to working in Russia, and we are currently preparing our plan of activity for 2008 and beyond. I attach a short brief outlining some of our current and forthcoming programmes to give you a flavour of where the new strategy is taking us in terms of activity.

If you would like any further detail on any aspect of the changes I have mentioned above, or on our Russia operation in general, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or Melissa Stewart in the first instance.

Kate Board
Geographical Director

6 December 2007

BRITISH COUNCIL RUSSIA CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

UK and Russian Film Festivals, October 2007

The UK film festival played to sell-out audiences firstly in Moscow and then in the regions. The films were carefully chosen to excite debate among Russian audiences. *This is England*, for example, was used to discuss extremism and xenophobia with a group of youth leaders. There was a strong educational component, linking up NFTS at Beaconsfield with Moscow film school, and industry networking events, leading to three films subsequently being sold to Russian distributors. As part of the project, we facilitated a sister Russian film festival in the UK, with a producers' and directors' networking event at BAFTA.

Football Unites—Sports project September/October 2007

Trips to Wembley for Russian amateur footballers, friendly matches between fans and press delegations, and web-based competitions, all spiced up the England/Russia European Championship qualifiers, as we used sport to build trust between our peoples. The project received significant press coverage in both countries. The highlight was the laying of a wreath by England fans to the memory of the 27 million Russian war dead at the eternal flame under the Kremlin walls. Through the project, we managed to build a new set of senior sports contacts, including the Russian Sports minister himself, which will be very useful for future projects.

BRIDGE (British Degrees in Russia) and QUEST (Quality assurance in Higher Education) projects 2006–07

Through facilitating 40 new joint degree programmes between Russian and UK universities, delivered in Russia, we have ensured that not only the rich and famous can benefit from a UK-style education. The courses are taught by a combination of Russian and British lecturers, and enrolment has been high. We have also shared UK expertise through our capacity-building QUEST programme, which has brought together consortia from industry and higher education institutions to develop competency statements for Russian Master's degrees which will ensure that students from such courses have the skills and knowledge that employers need.

THE NEXT STAGE

We are supporting the best and most innovative UK theatre groups, spotted by our Russian partners at the Edinburgh showcase, to perform in Russia. Our aim is to bring their work to new audiences, and give Russian theatre entrepreneurs the chance to meet them and share their experience in writing and producing new shows. The first UK company to appear in Moscow will be Stamping Ground Theatre, who will perform during the Stanislavsky Festival in Moscow in November. Next year Golden Mask festival, the most prestigious of Russian theatre festivals, has invited 5 UK companies to perform and conduct workshops with Russian counterparts.

LOW CARBON CHALLENGE

We have worked closely over the last two years with Russian institutions tackling the effects of global warming and looking into alternative sources of energy, and next year will see an increase in our activity in this area, as we join up with the pan-European project Low Carbon Challenges. We will be bringing our high-level contacts to a discussion forum on renewable energy, to be held in partnership with the British Embassy in February, and we will also be taking the discussion across continents as we link up Scotland, India, and Brazil by video conference in March.

CAREER LADDERS FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS

We are launching some exciting English language teacher training programmes from January 2008, which will be the further step towards creating a career path for teachers of English in Russia, building on our successful INSET programme which has reached over 17,000 teachers. The TKT global pilot will be done in Moscow and St. Petersburg, leading to the creation of a cadre of 50 teacher trainers, who will become a resource for their colleagues across Russia. Their experience will inform similar projects in other regions of the world.

GLOBAL SCHOOL LINKS

We have a strong track record of creating school links and developing joint curriculum projects between Russian and UK schools. With significant partnership funding, we aim to build larger scale partnerships between local education authorities next year, focusing on areas of common interest such as sport, tolerance, and leadership. This will be part of a global pilot.

Letter to the Clerk of the Committee from the Parliamentary Relations Team

FAC SOUTH ASIA INQUIRY REPORT: FOLLOW-UP TO EVIDENCE

In my letter of 5 October 2007 to Gosia McBride, we undertook to provide the Committee with further information on two outstanding points.

AREAS OF CO-OPERATION WITH INDIA ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The FCO continues to co-operate with India on climate change. At the 2008 UK-India summit we have made a joint undertaking for DEFRA and India's Ministry of Environment and Forests to collaborate on a project piloting implementation of programmatic CDM in India this year to jointly explore the potential of this to facilitate up-scaling of carbon market investment in accordance with India's future development priorities.

In addition to this the FCO, DEFRA and BERR ran a Joint UK-India international workshop on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS). During this workshop we aimed to develop a substantial CCS R&D programme in India and move India towards demonstration of CCS technology. Its key objectives were to:

- build capacity and expertise on CCS;
- encourage a stronger and more strategic approach on CCS in India;
- develop a roadmap for research, development and demonstration of CCS technology;
- develop a network of CCS stakeholders; and
- share the findings of a DEFRA-funded British Geological Survey study of CO₂ storage capacity in India.

 REVIEW OF DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS (DAS) AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES (RDAS)

Ministers are still considering how to implement the Review of RDA/DA Overseas Presence. Until Ministers have reached a decision UKTI is not in a position to publish the review's findings.

Richard Cooke

Head

Parliamentary Relations Team

23 January 2008

Submission from Sujit Sen, Bangladesh
BRIEF

Caretaker Government of Bangladesh began very well to clean up the administration, which was brought to a bad repute by previous BNP Government, but soon lost direction and took upon itself much more than what it could realistically implement and far beyond its mandate. Although the CG promised to hold free and fair elections by end of December 2008, the political and electoral reforms taken up may be used as an excuse to further delay the elections helping the military to entrench in the administration. As delay in holding elections would not be helpful to larger political process, international community must pressure CG to conduct elections by due date or even be brought forward. Emergency regulations which have curtailed freedom of expression of individuals and political parties should be lifted at the earliest so that the political activities could resume in preparation for elections.

Current process of trial of corrupt politicians and fair trial: While some political fundamentalist parties like JEI have gone untouched, there are genuine doubts of judicial manipulations in case of some politicians. Doubts of credibility of judicial process arose because Supreme Court (SC) and High Court (HC) are acting on somewhat different and contradictory lines. Appellate Division of SC routinely overturned or stayed favourable verdicts given by HC in some important criminal cases. In-camera trials also suggest that process is not open and free of suspicion. However, trial of those corrupt politicians and businessmen against whom enough evidence has been gathered, should be expedited irrespective of party affiliations or family connections.

It was gratifying to note that CG's administration and security agencies have done much to bring down threat of terrorist organisations like JMB and Harkat-ul-Jehad Al-Islam (HUJI). The task, however, cannot be complete unless main collaborators in the previous Government who aided, abetted and supported these organisations, are also dealt with according to the law. Criminal cases such as attack of August 2004 on Sheikh Hasina and that on British High Commissioner in Bangladesh must be brought into fast track trial as per the law so that the evidence collected is not tampered or lost.

People of Bangladesh were cheated by some military rulers, who came to power after assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, by preventing trial of 1971 war criminals and reinstating these criminals into power circles. During Bangladesh war in 1971, a section sided with the oppressive Pakistani forces. These were the leaders of JEI, a fundamentalist party, which helped the then military dictators to organise a systematic cleansing of freedom fighters. In 1993 a Commission of eminent citizens under the leadership of poet Sufia Kamal was formed to investigate war crimes. This Commission subsequently published two probe reports on the activities of some 16 criminals and collaborators of Pakistani forces. As Dhaka newspaper reports have pointed out from the archives of the BD Government, further evidence can well be found to prove the fact that leaders of the JEI have been responsible for committing war crimes. These war criminals included current JEI leaders who have served as Ministers under the previous coalition Government. Whereas an adjudication of war criminals was seriously delayed by motivated political forces in the past decade, a broad range of social and political organisations are now demanding this outstanding issue be urgently resolved. This demand has also recently been voiced by Amnesty International General Secretary Irene Khan.

Growing Jihadism and nexus between Bangladeshi radical fundamentalists and Al-Qaida network have also given rise to apprehensions of stability in the country, which is generally a vibrant, intellectual and tolerant society. Links between Pakistani based terrorist organisations like Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) and HUJI have seen radicalisation of the fundamentalist groups. Simultaneous serial bombings by HUJI in all districts of Bangladesh in 2006 only prove that left unchecked, same fate like that of Pakistan may be awaiting Bangladesh.

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