



Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

[REDACTED]
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DFID Department for
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28th August 2008

Dear Barry,

Thank you for your letter of 9 July (ref: KP/MARC01008/01081727) to Douglas Alexander, Secretary of State for International Development, enclosing one from your constituent, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] about UK aid to Ethiopia. I am sorry to find that you have not received an earlier reply.

The support provided by the Department for International Development (DFID) is specifically earmarked for poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance programmes and is not a general donation to the central budget. DFID imposes strict audit requirements on the Government of Ethiopia to ensure that the money we spend goes directly to poor people and is not used for unintended purposes, such as military expenditure.

[REDACTED] is correct to note that the Government of Ethiopia recently announced a 14% increase in defence spending (an amount of some US\$50 million). However, given the high levels of inflation currently experienced in Ethiopia, this amounts to a cut in real terms. Indeed, the Ethiopian government's funding to defence and security remains well within acceptable international guidelines, at around 2.5% of GDP.

I would like to assure your constituent that, as a result of DFID's work in Ethiopia, there have been real improvements in the lives of the poor. For example:

- Almost half the population now has access to clean water;
- We are helping to save some 8 million people from chronic hunger, and;
- 70,000 new teachers have been employed in the past three years.

Furthermore, DFID has provided £20 million in response to a humanitarian crisis that is affecting over 4 million people. This money will be channelled through United Nations agencies and non-government organisations.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

*- I am grateful to
Mr [REDACTED] for his
interest*

Gillian

GILLIAN MERRON