



Department
for International
Development



Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP
Secretary of State

Department for International Development
22 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2EG

Tel: 0207 023 0000

Email: PrivateSecretary@dfid.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dfid

Baroness Sandip Verma
Chair
EU External Affairs Sub-Committee
House of Lords

By email at: euclords@parliament.uk

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Dear Baroness Verma,

Thank you for your letter of 6 March regarding the Committee's inquiry into post-Brexit international development cooperation with the European Union (EU).

As the Prime Minister has made clear, we want a relationship with the EU that is based on friendly cooperation between sovereign equals, centred on free trade, and inspired by our shared history and values. Among those values is our shared commitment to alleviate poverty and tackle global challenges, such as climate change or infectious diseases.

Historically, the UK put approximately 10 per cent of our Official Development Assistance (ODA) through the EU each year. In the future we will make our own decisions about where, when, and how that money is spent. We expect to cooperate with the EU where we have shared objectives as we do with other large development partners. We do not believe we require a formal institutional structure to do so and, therefore, we are not seeking to participate in EU external action programmes.

Future cooperation with the EU could still take place on a case-by-case basis where it is in our mutual interest and if it adds value to our other efforts. This could, for example, be through joint programming in country or via trust funds. In any such case we would of course want to ensure that the UK obtained an appropriate level of oversight over our funds, and that UK entities would be eligible to implement programmes where we contribute.

You mentioned the potential impact of leaving the EU on UK NGOs. I can assure you that over the last year DFID Ministers and officials have engaged frequently with the sector to ensure they were prepared to exit, and that we understand the impact on their operations. Our assessment is that leaving the EU will have only a moderate impact, though we will continue to work closely with the sector to sure it remains a world leader.

During the Transition Period, UK organisations remain eligible to bid for EU development programmes and to implement them until closure. In the longer term, EU rules mean that UK organisations will still be eligible to bid for programmes delivered in Least Developed Countries and Highly Indebted Poor Countries.



Finally, you asked about the UK's residual ODA spend through the EU. Under the Withdrawal Agreement we will meet our commitments to all EU development programmes approved by 31 December 2020 until their closure. As these are multi-year programmes, this will result in a declining spending tail of ODA contributions that we expect to run until 2027. To ensure oversight of these funds, we are working to ensure we receive relevant documentation in a timely manner.

I would be happy to speak with the Committee to discuss these issues in more detail.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne Marie".

Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP
Secretary of State