

International Development Committee

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From Sarah Champion MP, Chair

17 November 2023

Dear Foreign Secretary,

On behalf of the International Development Committee, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs.

Your appointment comes at a time when the world is facing serious development challenges, from the humanitarian situation in Gaza, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and the growing threat posed by climate change. I am sure that your experience as a former Prime Minister will help you to get to grips with these challenges quickly and ably.

Against this backdrop of increasing global need, the UK's aid budget has suffered significant cuts in recent years because of the decision to reduce ODA spending from 0.7% to around 0.5% of Gross National Income. The FCDO's own Equality Impact Assessments set out the harm these cuts will cause to people—including women, girls, and people with disabilities—in some of the poorest countries in the world, facing the worst humanitarian crises.

As Prime Minister, you legislated to ensure the UK would always give a minimum of 0.7% of GNI as ODA. The need to return to this target is more urgent than ever.

The Committee is looking forward to hearing from you on this point and about your wider priorities for international development. Given you will be sitting in the House of Lords, with fewer opportunities for Members to question you directly, it would be helpful to formalise the previous informal arrangement whereby the Foreign Secretary appeared in front of this Committee at least twice a year. I would be grateful if you could respond to this letter setting out when you might be able to attend a first evidence session at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Champion MP
Chair of the International Development Committee