



HOUSE OF LORDS

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Wendy Morton MP
Minister for European Neighbourhood and the Americas
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

5 March 2021

Dear Wendy,

Funding for VSO

At its meeting on 3 March 2021, the International Relations and Defence Committee discussed the valuable work undertaken by VSO. The Committee regards VSO's contribution to international development, utilising the skills and time of volunteers, to be of significant value to the UK's efforts to support some of the world's poorest countries.

As I have put on the record, the International Relations and Defence Committee opposes the Government's decision to cut the UK's official development assistance (ODA) budget to 0.5% of gross national income (GNI) from 2021-22. Maintaining ODA spending at 0.7% of GNI contributes directly to the UK's national interest, by supporting development in some of the world's poorest states. In this context, does the Government intend to maintain the current level of funding for VSO's Volunteering for Development Programme in 2021-22 and beyond? It is important that VSO has the necessary funding for Volunteering for Development confirmed by the end of March in order for it to continue as an integral part of its offer for years to come.

Yours, as ever

Baroness Anelay of St Johns
Chair, International Relations and Defence Committee