

OCTOBER 2005: UK GOVERNMENT NEWS REPORT
JICA UK OFFICE

Sources:

- Department for International Development (DFID) website: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/>
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>
- HM Treasury website: <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/>
- 10 Downing Street website (PM's speeches): <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/>

PRESS RELEASES

30 October 2005

Hilary Benn made a **two-day visit** to **Rwanda, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo**. During the visit, he met with President Nkurunziza of Burundi to discuss how the UK can best support Burundi, including the country's newly fee-free primary school education; he met with President Kabila to see the preparations for next year's Presidential, Parliamentary and Provincial elections in the DRC; and met with President Kagame to discuss the UK's long-term development partnership with Rwanda, including further support to education. "Progress in the region shows that development can succeed if there is peace and stability", he said.

21 October 2005

£463,000 is being **contributed** by the UK to the **relief efforts** in **Guatemala and El Salvador** to help victims of the recent devastating floods and mudslides. The funds comprise £253,000 to be **channeled through two** non-governmental organisations (**NGOs**), Care International and Plan International, and the £210,000 already provided by the UK as part of the emergency relief from the European Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO). This support will help support the initial relief effort over the next three months.

20 October 2005

A **£20m cash injection** for **malaria research** was announced by the **Wellcome Trust**, one of the world's biggest biomedical research charities, and **DFID**. **Matched funding** of £2m each from the Trust and DFID every year from **2005/6 to 2009/10** has been pledged to the Medicines for Malaria Venture. MMV is a non-profit, public-private partnership, established to accelerate drug development for malaria. This latest grant will be used to support the world's largest dedicated programme of anti-malarial drug research and development. Currently MMV has more than twenty projects in its portfolio with one- third of these now in clinical development.

20 October 2005

DFID released **details** of **financial year 2004/05 development assistance expenditure** in the **2005 edition** of **Statistics on International Development (SID)**. SID provides details of the volume, type, destination and purpose of all UK development assistance.

Key statistics:

- The UK's Gross Public Expenditure on Development (GPEX) amounted to £4,823million in 2004/05. The **DFID aid programme** accounted for **£3,838 million** of this expenditure, or 80 per cent. The UK's GPEX has increased year on year between 2000/01 and 2004/05.
- Over **half** of DFID's total expenditure (56%) was **bilateral assistance** (£2,145 million) and 39 per cent (£1,504 million) was channelled through multilateral contributions. The balance of funds, 5 per cent of overall expenditure, covered DFID administration costs.
- DFID's bilateral assistance to sub-Saharan Africa rose from £672 million in 2003/04 to £825 million in 2004/05. Assistance to Asia also increased over this period.
- The **top five individual recipients** of DFID bilateral programme expenditure were **India** (£259 million), **Bangladesh** (£128 million), **Tanzania** (£97 million), **Sudan** (84 million) and **Afghanistan** (£80 million).
- Excluding humanitarian assistance, the proportion of DFID bilateral aid going to low income countries was 83 per cent.
- Total DFID **humanitarian assistance** was **£437 million**, comprising £344 million of bilateral assistance and £93 million through multilateral agencies. Sudan was the largest recipient of bilateral emergency aid (£78 million) followed by Bangladesh (£25 million) and

Democratic Republic of Congo (£22 million). Assistance to countries affected by the tsunami on 26th December 2004 amounted to £48 million by the end of March 2005 (14 per cent of all bilateral humanitarian assistance).

- Expenditure on **Poverty Reduction Budget Support (PRBS)** represented **20%** of DFID's bilateral programme (£423 million). **Fifteen countries received** this type of assistance.
- **£233 million** of DFID expenditure was channeled through **UK civil society organisations**, with major recipients including the British Red Cross, VSO, Oxfam and Save the Children.

Some figures are shown on a **calendar year basis** to allow international comparisons. These show that **in 2004**:

- Total net official development assistance (ODA) from the UK to developing countries was £4.3 billion which represented **0.36 per cent** of gross national income (**GNI**).
- The UK was the **fourth largest DAC donor**.

Online edition of SID: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/sid2005/contents.asp>

6 October 2005

Schools in Burundi have seen class sizes swell in the first few weeks of term after the newly-elected government's decision to scrap primary school fees brought an extra 500,000 children to school. The UK will provide **£2 million** in immediate assistance, to help provide more classrooms and teachers. The funds will support and extend **UNICEF's** ongoing '**Back To School**' programme in Burundi, helping UNICEF in its programme to construct 100 temporary classrooms, refurbish 500 schools, and provide water and sanitation facilities. Fast-track training will be made available for up to 3,000 unqualified teachers and for 1,000 former teachers returning to education. The UK is also in talks with the Government of Burundi on how to provide longer term-assistance to free education in the country.

6 October 2005

Tanzanian success in education and health brings further **UK support**. **£85 million** will be provided as **budget support** to be given directly to the Government of Tanzania, to be spent on the priorities outlined in the country's poverty reduction strategy, including health and education.

3 October 2005

The UK is to give **£200 million** to a **new World Bank 'catalytic' fund**, designed to help **African countries** make **faster progress** on their priorities for **improving health, education, infrastructure and access to water**. The announcement was made on the eve of the Africa Partnership Forum meeting in London on 4 and 5 October, for African countries and the international community to agree on how to monitor and take forward all commitments made to support Africa's development. The use of the fund will be guided by the priorities of the Africa Partnership Forum. It will provide money to countries that have shown an ability to make good use of increased amounts of aid, as well as countries with reforming and post-conflict governments that show a commitment to reducing poverty. Money will also be given to regional projects to deal with needs that cross borders, for example improving transport links between countries.

The Africa Catalytic Fund was proposed in the World Bank's Africa Action Plan, which forms part of the Bank's response to the commitments made at Gleneagles in June, and was endorsed by Bank Governors at their annual meeting in Washington on 24-25 September. The fund will be financed by voluntary contributions from Bank members.

DFID's £200 million contribution to the fund forms part of the £250 million resources for scaling up development assistance announced by Hilary Benn at the conclusion of the 14th replenishment of the International Development Association on 31 March 2005. (The remaining £50m has been committed to the Fast Track Initiative for education, intended to accelerate progress towards achieving universal primary education by 2015).

3 October 2005

The UK will provide an extra £1 million support for the food shortages in Zambia. The money will be used to support Oxfam in ensuring that the worst-affected people in Zambia will receive a combination of cash-grants and vouchers, which they can exchange at local markets

to buy food and essentials such as water, blankets and fuel, without the need to sell vital assets.

Oxfam believe that this kind of cash and voucher support will help households meet 70% of their food needs over a 5-month period. Giving cash and vouchers rather than food aid also helps local producers and cuts transport costs.

Today's announcement brings the UK's total support to Zambia for its food shortages to £1.5 million; and response to the food shortages facing southern Africa to over £57 million.

2 October 2005

Jamaican communities 'freed' from the grip of gangland culture are being helped with an **extra £750,000**, in addition to the £2.4 million already committed. The UK support will help the Government of Jamaica to continue its reform of the police force; tackle crime and corruption; and restore basic services, such as education, health and utility maintenance in previously gang-controlled 'garrison communities'

DFID provided initial support of £2.5 million to the Jamaica Constabulary Force JCF over three years. This programme has since come to an end and a further commitment of £2.4 million over three years has been committed from 1 August 2005 to help the Government of Jamaica deliver its policy priorities under their Medium Term Framework and National Security Strategy.

Today's announcement of UK funding of £750,000 is for 3 years and has been provided jointly by DFID (£375,000) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (£375,000).

NEWS

31 October 2005

A **new 'ethical trading' training programme for retail managers and suppliers**, developed by the Ethical Trading Initiative organisation (ETI) and the Co-operative College, and part-funded by DFID was launched. The programme, which begins in 2006, will see trainees from high-street firms studying the principles of ethical trading via modules designed by the Manchester-based Co-operative College, with the help of British businesses, trade unions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who have been working with ETI. The programme is designed to help move ethical trading principles further into the business mainstream in order to benefit some of the world's poorest people. DFID helped establish ETI in 1998 and has provided core funding of over £2m to date.

The ETI/Co-operative College training programme has been developed in association with Marks & Spencer, Levi Strauss, Pentland, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Traidcraft, the Trades Union Congress and the International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers Federation.

25 October 2005

EU Agriculture Ministers have agreed a **new regulation to tackle illegal logging**. The **Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)** deal will help prevent illegal timber from entering the European market. The package includes partnership agreements with timber-producing countries where governance and law enforcement is weak. It is hoped that Ghana will be one of the first countries to sign up. A licensing scheme will help these countries guarantee that their timber exports to the EU come from legal sources. The EU will now work with partner countries to develop the scheme.

DFID's Illegal Logging Programme supports countries in Africa and Asia to strengthen their forest governance and tackle the trade in illegally logged timber. In particular, DFID is supporting regional initiatives that encourage co-operation between timber-producing countries to address their enforcement and governance problems. The UK will work with other EU Member States to help develop partnership agreements now that political agreement on the regulation has been reached. DFID is also supporting civil society and private sector initiatives - in developing countries and in the UK - so that people can hold their governments to account and make forest markets work better for poor people.

- DFID FAQ on illegal logging: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/news/files/illegal-logging-g8-2.asp>
- Case study – tackling illegal logging: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/casestudies/files/g8/g8-illegal-logging.asp>
- Dedicated website: www.illegallogging.info

25 October 2005

The UK Presidency hosted an **Informal meeting of European Union Development Ministers** on the 24 and 25 October in Leeds, chaired by Hilary Benn.

Issues discussed were:

- The need to respond to the **South Asian earthquake**: Ministers agreed that more money and help needs to be given. European Commissioner Louis Michel said that he would put an additional 80 million Euros (around £54 million) of EC funds to help those affected by the earthquake. This would be in addition to the 110 million Euros (around £70m) of support already committed by Member States and the Commission. Further pledges are expected at a UN meeting in Geneva tomorrow. Ministers also agreed to work to strengthen the UN's capacity to respond to future disasters.
- The importance of delivering on **commitments to double aid** and provide sustained predictable funding.
- Ministers agreed that the EU as a whole should actively support **reform of the UN**, including through improved coordination at country level.
- There was a full discussion about the proposed **new Development Policy Statement** which will set the framework for future European aid spending. The Statement and measures to improve the effectiveness of EU aid, will be debated when Development Ministers meet again on 21-22 November in Brussels.
- With only six weeks to the **World Trade Organisation meeting in Hong Kong**, Ministers were joined by Peter Mandelson, the EU Trade Commissioner. They agreed the importance of increasing opportunities for developing countries to trade their way out of poverty. Although trade between developing countries was important, the EU could do more, notably by: making it easier for producers in developing countries to sell their goods in Europe; providing targeted aid to help producers to take advantage of this increased access; and providing assistance to producers, in sectors such as sugar, who will be affected by changes to the world trading system.
- Finally, the meeting discussed the Commission's **recent Communication on Africa**. The President of the African Development Bank, Donald Kaberuka, spoke about how the EU can best support stability, prosperity and development in Africa, in particular by working to strengthen African institutions. There will be further debate on 21-22 November with a view to agreeing a new EU Africa strategy at the European Council of Heads of Government in December. The food crisis in Southern Africa and the situation in Darfur were also discussed.

20 October 2005

A **new Practice Paper**, '**Social transfers and chronic poverty: emerging evidence and the challenge ahead**', considers the potential role that could be played by social transfers in tackling poverty in very poor countries - as well as some of the challenges to their implementation. Social transfers are regular, predictable grants - such as old age pensions, child benefits, and household cash (or food) transfers - that are provided to the very poor on a long-term basis. They are increasingly being adopted in a number of developing countries - such as Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique and Bangladesh - and the evidence of their impact on a wide range of MDGs is impressive.

The paper **concludes** that we should **take** social transfers much **more seriously as a policy option** in even the poorest countries. The evidence suggests that they are affordable and that the biggest barrier to their implementation is political will - among both developing country governments and donors. Of course, it is too early to say whether they will be successful in the poorest communities, so as large-scale national programmes are implemented it will be important to evaluate their impact carefully and learn lessons.

- Full paper: Social transfers and chronic poverty: emerging evidence and the challenge ahead

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/social-transfers.pdf>

10 October 2005

The UK government, working with the G7 countries, is **developing proposals** to set up an **innovative form of incentive for Research & Development (R&D) in vaccines** for diseases such as **malaria and AIDS**. The mechanism, known as **Advance Market Commitments (AMCs)**, would work by creating a competitive developing country market for future vaccines

that is sufficiently large and credible to stimulate private investment in vaccine R&D and manufacturing capacity and to accelerate vaccine introduction by developing countries.

DFID is undertaking a consultation process with industry, developing countries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other stakeholders including Whitehall departments to gain views on the proposed mechanism.

The closing date for contributions is 30th December 2005.

Further details on the consultation process:

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/consultations/default.asp#Advance%20Market%20Commitments>

10 October 2004

The **fifth meeting** of the **Africa Partnership Forum** took place in London on 4-5 October. The agenda for the meeting focused on the Role of the APF; a Joint Action Plan, covering commitments both by the international community and Africa; on prospects for financing Africa's development; and on the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Background papers:

- Communiqué: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/apf/apf-london-communication.pdf>
- Terms of Reference from the London meeting: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/apf/apf-tors-051005.pdf>

4 October 2005

Results of a regular **annual survey** of **Schoolchildren's Attitudes to Development** carried out as part of DFID's strategy to monitor public attitudes, and build support for international development:

- The trend of high levels of awareness since 2003 continues. **87%** of pupils said that they **know at least something about developing countries** and 14% said that they know a lot about them (this is a 4% increase on the 2004 figure).
- **Almost seven in ten** pupils were **concerned** about the living conditions of people in developing countries - lack of food, basic healthcare and education.
- **TV** news continues to be the **main source** of **information** on developing countries for most schoolchildren (88%). Newspapers and magazines were second most popular (68%), followed by school lessons (53%) and the internet (47%).
- Over **three-quarters** of children think that poverty in developing countries **affects the UK** at least a little, while only 8% think that the UK is unaffected. These findings are similar to previous years.
- Almost two-thirds of pupils felt that the **most important way** that the **Government** can help **reduce poverty** is by providing **training and expertise** (65%). This is followed by cancelling debt (52%) and working to prevent wars and conflict (45%). The findings are similar to 2004.
- Full report: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/school-survey05.pdf>
- Detailed statistical tables: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/schools-survey05-tables.pdf>
- DFID public opinion research on development: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/intheuk/opinion.asp>

SPEECHES

7 October 2005

Remarks by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown

Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund 40th anniversary lecture, Edinburgh

As we prepare for and then resume the talks on world trade, our job, Europe's job, America's job, is to be on the side of opening the markets of the rich to the poorest of the world. The key to progress is progress on agriculture, for most of the world's poor still depend on agriculture for their livelihood.

Building capacity to trade is about more than investment in infrastructure, it must also be about investment in people and their education and health. And the test of whether the richest countries will keep this year's promises for the doubling of African aid, the test of the 11 countries moving to 0.7 per cent, the test will be precise and concrete: whether education and

health in Africa and developing countries is properly funded and we move forward to meet our millennium education and health goals, schooling for all children by 2015 and eliminate avoidable infant deaths

Visiting Africa and Asia has brought me to the view there will be no schooling for millions of Africans unless there is universal free schooling, and confirmed my view that there can be no effective health care that will genuinely come to the aid of the poorest of Africa unless it is universal free health care.

The total cost of bringing free primary education to all children in Africa and South Asia is just \$10 billion a year - the best investment the world could ever make. Just think: for every person in the richest part of the world it is less than two pence a day. And we should think long term about education too: long term consistent sustained and predictable funding for buildings, equipment and teachers. The proposed International Finance Facility could play an important role in this.