



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

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See Ms Samarasinghe,

Thank you for your letter of 20 December concerning funding for OHCHR from the United Nations Regular Budget. I am very sorry not to have replied sooner – although your letter was sent in December, I only saw it in the last week!

The United Kingdom believes that the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the role of the High Commissioner is vital in the promotion and protection of human rights. The United Kingdom is committed to ensuring adequate funding is provided, while of course striking a balance between sound financial management and cost effectiveness. The negotiations on the UN Regular Budget for 2014 and 2015 concluded on 27 December, and reflected reductions in many areas in terms of funds and staff, with an overall cut in staffing levels of 2% across the UN Secretariat. While overall we pressed hard for needed savings, I was pleased that we were able to secure the reinstatement of several such OHCHR positions which had been suggested for abolition, and to agree a Regular Budget for Human Rights work of only fractionally under the final budget for 2012 and 2013.

We are also pleased that the fifth committee last month agreed a package of reforms for the UN human rights treaty body system which, through savings made largely from translation and interpretation, will see increased resources for human rights work; including additional meeting time for treaty bodies and capacity building for states parties. We look forward to the formal adoption of the resolution this month and the improvements it will bring to this important part of the UN's human rights architecture.

Please be assured that we will continue to pay close attention to the need to provide adequate resources for the work of the United Nations in this area.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Lyall Grant

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