

## I. Investing in Sustainable Development Efforts in Developing Member States

The United Kingdom wholeheartedly supports sustainable development efforts within all member states, both developed and developing, as critical steps to guarantee the future prosperity of the human species. In order to invest abroad in the sustainable development efforts of developing member states, it is essential that the member state in question have domestic policies which favor sustainability over profitability. The United Kingdom's investment in sustainable development goes back more than a century to 1876 when Her Majesty's Government passed the River Pollution Prevention Act in order to, "prevent the dumping of raw sewage into Britain's rivers".<sup>1</sup> After the political and social upheaval of the early half of the twentieth century, the United Kingdom continued its domestic sustainability efforts in the 1950s through legislative measures such as the Clean Air Act, as well as the formation of the Green Belt.<sup>2</sup> After the successful implementation of these particular domestic experiments in sustainable developments, among many others, the United Kingdom continues to play an active role in the sustainable development of states abroad, particularly states which are members of the Commonwealth of Nations.

The United Kingdom has signed and ratified more than fifteen landmark international environmental agreements concerning topics ranging from air pollution, desertification, endangered species, hazardous wastes, limits on whaling, ship pollution, and endangered wetlands' protection. The list of agreements prominently includes the Antarctic Treaty, the Antarctic-Environment Protocol, and the Kyoto Protocol.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the United Kingdom has been represented in every major international conference concerning environmental sustainability since the formation of the Club of Rome in 1968, the purpose of which was to "analyze the dynamic interactions between industrial production, population, environmental damage, food consumption and natural resource usage."<sup>3</sup> The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) was established in the United Kingdom in 1971 "with a mandate to seek ways to make economic progress without destroying the environmental resource base."<sup>4</sup> The United Kingdom was an active participant in the pivotal 1972 United Nations Conference on Human Environment held in Stockholm.<sup>5</sup> In addition, United States and United Kingdom scientists tremendously contributed to the discovery of the Antarctic ozone hole in 1985.<sup>6</sup> In conclusion, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg, South Africa. This conference set up agendas such as the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development and the Plan of Implementation around which the United Kingdom has framed its "international priorities on sustainable development."<sup>7</sup>

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland applauds and commends the efforts of other developed states in their investments in developing states. The United Kingdom's unprecedented 1994 national strategy concerning sustainable development included strategies equally applicable to any state, developed or developing.<sup>8</sup> It listed among its strategies the desire that "decisions should be based on the best possible scientific information and analysis of risks, [and] cost implications should be brought home directly to the people responsible, adopting the polluter pays principle."<sup>9</sup> The United Kingdom is in full support of any international investment agreements and foreign direct investments between developed member states and developing member states such as the United Kingdom's private funds concentrating in sustainable trade financing, low-income housing investments, and clean energy and clean water investments in Asia and South America amounting to more than \$200 million.<sup>10</sup>

## II. Responsible Management of Water Resources to Prevent Destruction of Ecosystems

As a fundamental requirement for human survival, water is at the heart of any society's sustainability and stability. Historically, civilizations were formed due to the reliable presence of water for agricultural irrigation. Indeed, all major cities in the world today have either an underground reservoir, a river, or full access to the sea. Only from requisite access to secure, steady, and hygienic water sources have states been able to emerge as fully-fledged members of the developed world. Conversely, underdeveloped states, many of which are within Sub-Saharan Africa, are handicapped in the realm of economic development because 50-80% "of poor populations...are found in fragile ecosystems and mainly remote and ecologically vulnerable rural areas".<sup>11</sup> This situation is due to deforestation or desertification resulting from poor or nonexistent irrigation techniques, stemming from a lack of education about water management.<sup>12</sup> The United Kingdom, with its cornucopia of important environmental organizations such as Water UK, the British Ecological Society, the Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development, and the Ethical Consumer, is at the forefront of researching and implementing responsible management techniques of water resources to prevent destruction of ecosystems.<sup>13</sup> Some of the actions taken by these organizations include carbon accounting, flooding reviews, and anaerobic digestion developments. The United Kingdom has also been a sponsor and signatory to numerous landmark resolutions concerning responsible

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<sup>1</sup> Caldecott, Ben and Dick, Gavin. "David Cameron's Environmental Policy will Succeed Where Labor has Failed". *The Telegraph*. March 2010. <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/7407578/David-Camerons-environmentalism-will-succeed-where-Labours-failed.html>>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> "The United Kingdom". *The CIA World Factbook*. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html>>

<sup>4</sup> "Sustainable Development Timeline". *International Institute for Sustainable Development*. <<http://www.iisd.org/rio+5/timeline/sdtimeline.htm#1992>>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> "A Very Brief History of Sustainable Development". *Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs*. <<http://sd.defra.gov.uk/what/history/>>

<sup>8</sup> "Environmental Policy and Green Issues". *University of Huddersfield: Sustainability and Environmental Module*. <<http://scom.hud.ac.uk/scomjm4/mmpport/susmod/Page3.htm>>

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> "Impact Investment Funds". *Impactbase: A Project of the Global Impact Investing Network*. <<http://www.impactbase.org/info/examples-impact-investment-funds>>

<sup>11</sup> "Combating Environmental Degradation". *International Fund for Agricultural Development*. <<http://www.ifad.org/events/past/hunger/envir.html>>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> "United Kingdom Organizations and Pressure Groups". *Greenphase*. <<http://www.greenphase.co.uk/organisations.html>>

water management, such as General Assembly Resolutions 2997, 2996, 2995, and 2994. As a result of Resolution 2997, regarding the "Institutional and Financial Arrangements for International Environmental Cooperation", the United Kingdom was elected by the Assembly to be on the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.<sup>14</sup> As stated in the United Kingdom's report to the United Nations in April of 2000 at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), "The United Kingdom is committed to the elimination of poverty through work in partnership with other governments, business, civil society, the research community and multilateral institutions."<sup>15</sup> The United Kingdom's commitments to Asia and India total over \$210 million and \$160 million in USD, respectively.<sup>16</sup> The United Kingdom's private sector has also demonstrated unwavering attention towards responsible water management by reducing deforestation, as was seen in early 2011 when the amount of British companies which agreed to disclose their management practices concerning "forest-risk commodities" to the Global Canopy Foundation's Forest Footprint Disclosure project outnumbered the whole of North America and the rest of Europe.<sup>17</sup> The United Kingdom believes that its domestic Flood and Water Management Act of 2010 is a good resource for other states to look to when looking for ideas on how to design sustainable urban environments.<sup>18</sup>

The United Kingdom looks forward to continue strengthening the implementation of Agenda 21 as a comprehensive instrument for action to be taken both on the domestic level and the international level by Member States of the United Nations. The United Kingdom commends this plan as a critical foundation for further action aimed to protect water sustainability. Furthermore, the United Kingdom is in full support of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and hopes to see future resolutions building upon this framework. The United Kingdom is especially supportive of future policies concerning sustainable management of water resources if they involve bilateral and multilateral assistance partnerships. The United Kingdom will continue to provide developing states assistance in addressing desertification and potable water depletion, and will ensure that the pleas for assistance from states in need do not go unheeded as we move forward into this century.

### III. Improving Access to Healthcare in the Developing World

Reliable and universal access to healthcare is a critical component of protecting individuals within society. If a hypothetical individual is incapacitated due to a physical illness which diminishes their physical capabilities or shortens their life, such an individual cannot focus or even consider their environmental sustainability. In short, physical infirmities prevent individuals from contributing to the growth of the national economy. The United Kingdom's time-honored and renowned universal healthcare system can be a source of ideas concerning the strategic implementation of resources towards improving healthcare access in the developing world. The United Kingdom's healthcare system is founded on the principle of communal responsibility to protect the frail and infirm. Prime Minister David Cameron stated in June 2011 that, "In this country we have the most...precious institution and precious idea: that whenever you're ill, however you are, rich or poor, whatever your income, whatever your status, you can walk into a hospital or surgery and get treated for free, no questions asked, no cash asked. I will never put that at risk."<sup>19</sup> The United Kingdom's National Health Service is structured in such a manner as to permit, "a mix of for-profit and not-for-profit insurers [to] provide supplementary private health insurance."<sup>20</sup> Since sifting through multiple private insurance companies to gather information beneficial the patient can be difficult, the NHS Information Centre acts "as a hub for high quality, national, comparative data, [and] deliver[s] information for local decision makers, to improve the quality and efficiency of care."<sup>21</sup>

The United Kingdom has been very active in aiding states which are crippled by poor or absent healthcare systems due to the challenges posed by climate and economic underdevelopment. Her Majesty's Government has been recently assisting Malawi's faltering healthcare system by contributing \$122 million annually.<sup>22</sup> The United Kingdom also participates in a joint program with the United States, particularly the non-governmental Carter Center, in a humanitarian enterprise to wipe out Guinea worm disease.<sup>23</sup> In 2009, former Prime Minister Gordon Brown and World Bank Director Robert Zoellick, led an international effort to raise money on behalf of developing countries to improve their healthcare systems. Of the \$5 billion total committed, the United Kingdom's contribution from the Exchequer would be worth £250 million, or \$410 million.<sup>24</sup> Multilateral, innovative, and bold private and private efforts such as these will be the foundation for moving forward in improving healthcare in developing states. A projected target of ten million people are intended to receive access healthcare facilities and medical expertise due to this particular effort. The project is still developing in its scope and success, with difficulties caused by the continual strain of the global financial crisis. Any future resolutions and proposals should take into account the financial realities of both developed and developing states.

The United Kingdom feels any discussion concerning the betterment of the healthcare systems of impoverished countries must begin with a discussion of the seven solutions proposed at the 2008 Global Economic Symposium. The seven solutions are as follows: broadening the medical base, free clinics for routine check-ups and basic healthcare, keeping the public sector's finance role well-defined, placing the improvement of preventative healthcare as a pre-condition to the establishment of more advanced healthcare, soften intellectual property rights, establish an international health fund, and "foster non-government, community-based health care insurance."<sup>25</sup> Only by working together can the international community successfully overcome this pressing humanitarian dilemma.

<sup>14</sup> "Resolutions Adopted by the Reports of the Second Committee". United Nations Environmental Programme. <[http://www.unep.org/PDF/UN\\_GA\\_2997.pdf](http://www.unep.org/PDF/UN_GA_2997.pdf)>

<sup>15</sup> "Report by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. April 2000. <[http://www.unccd.int/cop/reports/developed/2000/united\\_kingdom\\_of\\_great\\_britain\\_and\\_northern\\_ireland-eng.pdf](http://www.unccd.int/cop/reports/developed/2000/united_kingdom_of_great_britain_and_northern_ireland-eng.pdf)>

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> "Forest Footprint Disclosure Annual Review 2010" Global Canopy Programme. <[http://www.forestdisclosure.com/docs/FFD\\_annual\\_review\\_2010.pdf](http://www.forestdisclosure.com/docs/FFD_annual_review_2010.pdf)>

<sup>18</sup> "Key Areas Covered by the Flood and Water Management Act". Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. <<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/flooding/policy/fwmb/key-areas.htm>>

<sup>19</sup> "Cameron Outlines His Changes to NHS Reforms" BBC News Online. June 2011. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-13675619>>

<sup>20</sup> "The United Kingdom Healthcare System" The Commonwealth Fund. February 2008. <[http://www.commonwealthfund.org/usr\\_doc/UK\\_Country\\_Profile\\_2008.pdf?section=4061](http://www.commonwealthfund.org/usr_doc/UK_Country_Profile_2008.pdf?section=4061)>

<sup>21</sup> "Sickness and Absence Rates in the NHS: April-June 2011". National Health Service. June 2011. <[http://www.ic.nhs.uk/webfiles/publications/010\\_Workforce/absenceratejun11/SA\\_Bulletin\\_Oct11.pdf](http://www.ic.nhs.uk/webfiles/publications/010_Workforce/absenceratejun11/SA_Bulletin_Oct11.pdf)>

<sup>22</sup> "United Kingdom Aid to Malawi". UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. June 6th, 2011. <<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=92877>>

<sup>23</sup> "Goodbye Guinea Worm". Department for International Development. September 27, 2011. <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Stories/Case-Studies/2011/Goodbye-Guinea-Worm/>>

<sup>24</sup> "Aid Deal Pledges Free Healthcare" BBC News Online. September 2009. <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/8271882.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/8271882.stm)>

<sup>25</sup> "Financing Healthcare for the Poor". Global Economic Symposium. <<http://www.global-economic-symposium.org/solutions/the-global-society/financing-health-care-for-the-poor/strategy/perspective/older/gesolutions-2008-financing-health-care-for-the-poor>>