

DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS  
ENTERPRISE & REGULATORY REFORM

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Dr Caroline Lucas MEP  
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24 Southwark Street  
London SE1 1TY

14 March  
~~February~~ 2008

Dear Dr Lucas,

Thank you for your letter of 23 January to Douglas Alexander about G8 action on water and sanitation. I am replying as the Minister who leads on the issues raised.

I agree that more needs to be done to improve access to water and sanitation. This is particularly the case in sub-Saharan Africa, where the Millennium Development Goal targets for access to these basic services are so far off-track. The UK, through DFID, is committed to doing more to help.

DFID has committed itself to increasing our efforts to improve access to water and sanitation. We doubled our funding for water to Africa to £95 million per year to 2008 with a further doubling to £200 million per year by 2011. We are focusing on the most off-track countries in Africa - Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Sudan.

I agree that better coordination of international effort is needed. DFID's Global Call for Action on Water and Sanitation published in 2006 identifies what the world must do to increase access to water and sanitation; ensure money is spent more effectively; and ensure the right structures are put in place to make better progress.

DFID is pushing for better coordination of international aid for water and sanitation, working together to common objectives. For example we need one high level annual global meeting to decide on action and

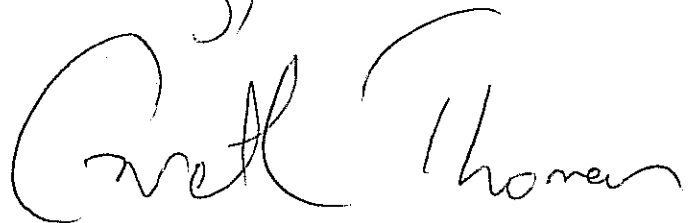
check commitments by industrialised and developing countries are met. I am pleased to say that donors and developing countries agreed to support these ideas at the International Monetary Fund/World Bank spring meetings April 2007.

We are encouraging greater international action and prioritisation of water at the 2008 G8 summit in Japan, including revitalising the Evian G8 Action Plan on Water.

In 2007 we published an update on DFID's work in water and sanitation. I enclose a copy, which you may want to pass on to your constituent.

I hope this is helpful.

*Yours sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gareth Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and "T".

GARETH THOMAS