

Rt Hon David Cameron MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street,  
London SW1A 2AA

21 January 2011

Dear Prime Minister,

**Re: Bribery Act**

We are writing to express our concerns at recent reports that the Bribery Act is to be reviewed.

We represent the Bond Governance Group, which comprises 67 British NGOs who, through their work, witness the devastating effects of corruption on the developing countries every day. Our experience has taught us that corruption continues to be one of the biggest obstacles to development, poverty alleviation and good governance. The cost of corruption in Africa alone has been estimated at US\$148 billion a year, representing 25% of the continent's GDP.<sup>1</sup>

It is our experience that supply-side bribery by companies is a significant part of this problem. The Bribery Act is an important step forward in addressing this supply-side corruption, in which UK companies are at times complicit. It is part of a global fabric of anti-corruption legislation, which has been put into place in recent years, and gone hand in hand with more active enforcement by many countries.

It is by no means the case that the Bribery Act puts the UK out of step with its business competitors by providing more stringent legislation than that of other countries. Indeed, the cross-party consensus which passed the Act was built on recognition that the UK needed to meet its international obligations, particularly under the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. In its December 2010 Report, the OECD Working Group on Bribery strongly urged the UK to meet the April 2011 deadline for commencement.<sup>2</sup>

The G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan agreed in Seoul in November 2010 also reinforces the case for the UK to ensure its legislation meets international standards.

The Act is also fully in line with the development agenda being pursued by your government in Afghanistan and through the Department for International Development.

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<sup>1</sup> African Union study on corruption, 2002 - see Smith, Pieth and Jorge (February 2007). "The Recovery of Stolen Assets: A Fundamental Principle of the UN Convention Against Corruption".

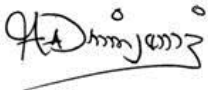
<sup>2</sup> UNITED KINGDOM: PHASE 1ter Report, Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions, 16 December 2010

If the Act is weakened or delayed, the result will be to undermine the UK's international standing, counter-act UK aid and development spending and perpetuate corrupt economies that themselves damage the UK's business interests and condemn their citizens to a life of poverty.

We strongly urge you to maintain the Bribery Act in an undiluted form and ensure it commences as planned in April 2011.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,



Abi Akinyemi  
Chair, Bond Governance Group



Loretta Minghella  
UK Director, Christian Aid



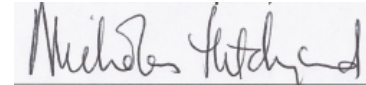
Chandrashekhar Krishnan  
Executive Director, Transparency International



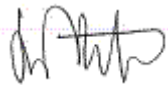
Chris Bain  
Director, CAFOD



Gavin Hayman  
Director of Campaigns, Global Witness



Nicholas Hildyard  
Co-Director, The Corner House



John Plastow  
Programme Director, Care International-UK



Frederik Galtung  
CEO, Tiri



Matthew Frost  
Director, Tearfund

**On behalf of the steering group of the Bond Governance and Anti-Corruption Groups:**

CAFOD, Care International – UK, Christian Aid, The Corner House, Corruption Watch, Global Witness, One World Action, Oxfam GB, Plan International – UK, Practical Action, Progressio, Save the Children, Tearfund, Transparency International UK, Water Aid, World Vision - UK

**In copy to:**

Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice  
Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills