A new publication from Civitas by Jonathan Foreman has called for UK aid to be cut, diverted to defence spending and for the Department for International Development to be absorbed into the Foreign Office. “A report that is based more on sweeping generalisations and the author’s beliefs than on evidence is hardly a good basis for rethinking Britain’s development policy. Reaching the 0.7% national income target on aid, as the UK is on track to in the coming months, is critical to fully address the scale of global development and poverty challenges. Effective UK aid does make a critical difference to the lives of millions of people and Britain remains an international development leader - a fact we should be proud of whatever Mr Foreman may prefer to believe,” said Ben Jackson, Chief Executive of Bond.

Amy Dodd, Coordinator for the UK Aid Network, also said: “While this report may choose to disregard the facts, the evidence tells us that aid can work and, when done right, can help to reduce long-term dependence. In the next few years, UK aid will help over 75 million people get access to good, formal financial services. Exactly the kind of thing that is needed to help drive economic growth and independence.

“The Department for International Development was established specifically to ensure that UK aid was spent only on tackling global poverty and is widely recognised as one of the best development agencies, most notably topping the 2012 aid transparency index. Diverting UK aid into defence spending and the Foreign Office would be more likely to reduce the effectiveness of our aid.”

Notes for Editors:

1. For further comment or questions please contact Amy Dodd on 07530 707 515 or amy@ukan.org.uk.
2. See also the Bond and UK Aid Network joint briefing ‘Reaching 0.7%’ which outlines five key reasons why the UK must reach and maintain the international aid target of 0.7% GNI (gross national income) from 2013. http://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/Bond_UK_Aid_Network_AID_messaging_publication_-_June_2012.pdf