Dear Foreign Secretary,

We are deeply concerned to hear the government intends to cut fundamental elements of UK aid – namely, funding for health, preventing and responding to conflict and tackling the climate emergency. The crisis in Ukraine is a humanitarian tragedy with significant geopolitical consequences, and the FCDO is right to respond. However, the significance of this crisis demonstrates the importance of having a bold and ambitious International Development Strategy that is poverty-focused, evidence and rights-based, and accountable to the British public and communities it is meant to serve.

The Government’s own strategy states the UK’s global reputation and influence is dependent on the “three Ds” of defence, diplomacy and development. It now risks undermining its own effectiveness by rowing back on development. It would be short-sighted to drop critical issues like global health, climate change and conflict prevention from the forthcoming International Development Strategy. It would also cost lives. These are areas where the UK has a strong track record of impact and significant expertise and this move will undermine the UK’s ability to play our part globally in tackling urgent challenges, increasing security, and eradicating poverty. Supporting countries in times of crisis is critically important, but so too is investing in the development assistance that prevents these crises.

Looming famines in Afghanistan, Yemen, and the Horn of Africa – exacerbated by global food price hikes as a result of the crisis in Ukraine – and the devastation caused by Covid-19 and climate change should be a reminder of how intrinsically linked we all are, and that no-one is safe until we all are. Now more than ever, it is essential the UK’s aid budget be spent in ways that maximise the UK’s ability to respond to and prevent crises. Withdrawing funding from one crisis to pay for another simply displaces the problem and ultimately does not reduce the costs. The right decision would be to restore the UK’s 0.7% GNI on Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment.

Since 1974, the UK has committed to supporting people in times of crisis: providing vaccines and other health services to marginalised communities, investing in peacebuilding to prevent conflict and investing in communities so they can adapt to the most devastating consequences of climate change. By honouring our promises to lower-income countries and communities, we demonstrate that we are a country that provides solutions and plays its part in the world. We cannot do that if we abandon development.

Yours sincerely,
Laura Kyrke Smith, Executive Director, International Rescue Committee (IRC) UK
Karl Hankinson, CEO, Able Child Africa
Josephien Rodgers, Executive Director, Access Agriculture
David Evans, UK Country Director, Ace Africa UK
Jean-Michel Grand, Executive Director, Action Against Hunger UK
Katie Husselby, Network Manager, Action for Global Health Network
Othman Moqbel, CEO, Action For Humanity
Frances Longley, Chief Executive, ActionAid UK
Bert R Smit, CEO, ADRA-UK
Andrew Betts, Director, Advantage Africa
Chris Roles, Managing Director / CEO, Age International
Ian Govendir, CEO, Aids Orphan UK Trust
Graeme Hodge, Chief Executive, All We Can & Y Care International
Tim Monger, CEO, Amigos Worldwide
Camilla Knox-Peebles, Chief Executive, Amref Health Africa UK
Alexandra Daniels, Chief Executive, APT Action on Poverty
Quinn McKew, Executive Director, ARTICLE 19
Dr Nicola Swan, Executive Director, BE REEL
Stephanie Draper, CEO, Bond
Danielle Morley, CEO, Bonsucro
Lewis Temple, Chief Executive Officer, BRAC UK
Elizabeth Winter, Executive Director, British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group
Zahid Torres-Rahman, Founder and CEO, Business Fights Poverty
Christine Allen, Director, CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development)
Ru Hartwell, Director, Carbon Link
Laurie Lee, CEO, CARE International UK
Anil Patil, Executive Director, Carers Worldwide
Kirsty Smith, CEO, CBM UK/BasicNeeds
Anna-mai Andrews and Katie Fowler, Co-CEOs, Chance for Childhood
Caron Bradshaw OBE, Chief Executive, Charity Finance Group
Martina Gant, CEO, Child.org
Jill Healey, Executive Director, ChildHope UK
Patrick Watt, interim CEO, Christian Aid
Madeeha Ansari, Founder, Cities for Children
Catherine Pettengell, Director, Climate Action Network UK (CAN-UK)
Danny Harvey, Executive Director, Concern Worldwide UK
Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director, Conciliation Resources
Matthew Owen, Director, Cool Earth
Andy Pask, Chief Executive Officer, Cord
Gazala Shaikh, Director, Dalit Solidarity Network - UK
Ian Agnew, Director, Dark Woods Coffee Ltd
Harpinder Athwal Collacott, CEO, Development Initiatives
Matthew Lake, CEO, Dhaka Ahsania Mission
Debra Allcock Tyler, Chief Executive, Directory of Social Change
Keith Robertson, Manager, Disability Beyond Borders
Ellen Waters, Director of Development, Doctors of the World UK
Shane Tomlinson Acting, Chief Executive Officer, E3G - Third Generation Environmentalism
Sam Lawson, Director, Earthsight
Jess Camburn, CEO, Elrha
Tim Livesey, CEO, Embrace the Middle East
Mark Smith, Director, Enable-Ed
Petter Matthews, Executive Director, Engineers Against Poverty
Mary Rice, Executive Director, Environmental Investigation Agency
Steve Trent, CEO, Environmental Justice Foundation
Patricia Barnett, Director, Equality in Tourism International
Peter J McAllister, Executive Director, Ethical Trading Initiative
Gavin Crowden, Executive Director, Every Casualty Counts
Shanon Shah, Director, Faith for the Climate
Sandra Golding, CEO, Feed the Minds
Hannah Mowat, Campaigns Coordinator, Fern
Saul Billingsley, Executive Director, FIA Foundation
Rachel Lindley, CEO, Five Talents
Ian Johnson, CEO, Food for the Hungry UK
Prof. Gail Davey OBE, Director, Footwork, the International Podoconiosis Initiative
Winnie Ssanyu Sseruma, International Development consultant, Freelance Consultant
Christine Stegling, Executive Director, Frontline AIDS
Jessica Woodroffe, Director, Gender and Development Network
Dr Joel C. Gill, Executive Director, Geology for Global Development
Dr. Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer, Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage
Niki Mardas, Executive Director, Global Canopy
Marie Rumsby, UK Country Director, Global Citizen
Jenny Hodgson, Executive Director, Global Fund for Community Foundations
Sarah Hawkes and Kent Buse, Co-Directors, Global Health 50/50
Siobhan Walsh, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), GOAL
Hyejeoung Yang, Director, Good Neighbours UK (GNUK)
Oliver Greenfield, Convenor, Green Economy Coalition
Doug Parr, Policy Director, Greenpeace UK
Tum Kazunga, CEO, Habitat for Humanity Great Britain
Naomi Burke-Shyne, Executive Director, Harm Reduction International
Martin Drewry, CEO, Health Poverty Action
Mark Waddington, CEO, Hope and Homes
Claire O’Shea, Head of Partnership, Hub Cymru Africa
George Graham, Chief Executive, Humanity & Inclusion UK
Adele Paterson, CEO, IHP
Parmi Dheensa, Executive Director, Include Me TOO
Professor Melissa Leach, Director, Institute of Development Studies
Jasmina Haynes, Chief Executive Officer, Integrity Action
Nic Hailey, Executive Director, International Alert
Marge Berer, Coordinator, International Campaign for Women’s Right to Safe Abortion
Professor Julia Downing, Chief Executive, International Children’s Palliative Care Network
Andrew Norton, Director, International Institute for Environment and Development
John Reynolds, CEO, International Nepsl Fellowship
John Young, Executive Director, International Network for Advancing Science and Policy
Dr Alvaro Bermejo, Director-General, International Planned Parenthood Federation
Brian Dalton, CEO, Irish in Britain
Waseem Ahmad, Chief Executive Officer, Islamic Relief Worldwide
Diarmuid McDonald, Lead Organiser, Just Treatment
Ciaran Maguire, CEO, Karuna Trust
Olivia Barker White, CEO, Kids Club Kampala
Laura Hucks, Director, King’s Global Health Partnerships
Ruth Owen, CEO, Leonard Cheshire
Tom Kingsley, National Director, UK Light for the World
Samantha Ross, International Programme Director, Link Education International
Fiona Greig, CEO, Link Education International
Professor Claire Heffernan, Director, London International Development Centre
Ian Agnew, Chairperson, Lorna Young Foundation
Darren Cormack, CEO, MAG
Charles Nelson, Chief Executive, Malaria Consortium
James Whiting, Chief Executive, Malaria No More UK
Liz Hughes OBE, Chief Executive, MapAction
David Johnson, Chief Executive, Margaret Pyke Trust
Michael McKean, Interim Executive Director, Mercy Corps
Joshua Castellino, Executive Director, Minority Rights Group
Emma France, Glonal Development & Strategic Engagement Director, mothers2mothers
Simon Cooke, CEO, MSI Reproductive Choices
Irfan Khan, Director Humanitarian and International Partnerships, Muslim Hands
Matthew Hodson, Executive Director, NAM aidsmap
Melissa Green, General Secretary, National Federation of Women’s Institutes
Charles Benjamin, Chief Executive Officer, Near East Foundation UK
Annabel Harris, CEO, Network for Africa
Fiona Gorton, Company Secretary, Resources and Finance Officer, Omega Research Foundation
Clare Kiely, Managing Director, On Our Radar
Romilly Greenhill, UK Director, ONE Campaign
James Harcourt, Managing Director, Options Consultancy Services
Rebecca Cronin, CEO, Orbis UK
Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, Chief Executive of Oxfam GB, Oxfam Great Britain
Naomi Sosa, CEO, Papua Partners
Lois Quam, President and CEO, Pathfinder International
Dylan Mathews, Chief Executive, Peace Direct
Fleur Auzimour Just, Chief Executive Officer, Peaceful Change initiative
Billy Curryer, Director, PHASE Worldwide
Mike Podmore, Director, STOPAIDS
Tom Dannatt, CEO, Street Child
Katie Cowie, Policy and Advocacy Director, Students for Global Health UK
Fadhili Maghiya, CEO, Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel
Charlie Gamble, Chief Executive Officer, TackleAfrica
Paul John Sommerfeld, Chair, TB Alert
Leela Shanti, CEO, Team Kenya
Nigel Harris, Chief Executive, Tearfund
Ian Green, Chief Executive, Terrence Higgins Trust
Alexander Knapp, Chief Executive Officer, The AKCGlobal Group
Prof Kent Buse, Director, Healthier Societies Program, The George Institute for Global Health
Major General (Ret'd) James M Cowan CBE DSO, Chief Executive Officer, The HALO Trust
Simon Bishop, CEO, The Power of Nutrition
Caroline Qutteneh, Director, THE WELFARE ASSOCIATION
Philippa Carrick, Chief Executive Officer, Tibet Relief Fund
Sarah Ingleby, Chief Executive Officer, Tools for Self Reliance
Lynne Morris, CEO, Toybox
Charlotte Timson, CEO, Traidcraft Exchange
Tom Skirrow, CEO, Tree Aid
Ben Simms, Chief Executive Officer, Tropical Health and Education Trust (THET)
Katy Cooper, Chair, UK Working Group on Non-Communicable Diseases
Sarah Kline, Chief Executive Officer, United for Global Mental Health
Tessa Khan, Director, Uplift
Clare Wearden, Director, Village Water Ltd
Dr Philip Goodwin, Chief Executive Officer, VSO
Rob Williams, CEO, War Child
Tim Wainwright, Chief Executive, WaterAid
Susie Ventris-Field, Chief Executive, Welsh Centre for International Affairs (WCIA)
Sara Bowcutt, Co-Managing Director, Women for Women International
Mary-Ann Stephenson, Director, Women's Budget Group
Jon Rosser, CEO, World Child Cancer
Julian Gore-Booth, CEO, World Federation of Anaesthesiologists
Cary James, CEO, World Hepatitis Alliance
Mark Sheard, Chief Executive Officer, World Vision UK
Stephen R Connor, Executive Director, Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance
Anita Tiessen, CEO, Youth Business International