



Department
for International
Development



Nick Hurd MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

Rt Hon George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
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21 December 2015

Dear George,

Thank you for your letter of 9 December to Justine Greening, writing on behalf of your constituents about global polio eradication. I am responding as the Minister who leads on the issues raised.

There has been major progress towards the goal of polio eradication and the end is now in sight. Eradication efforts have led to a 99% decrease in polio cases since the launch of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988 and only two countries - Afghanistan and Pakistan - are reporting cases of wild poliovirus in 2015. As of 9 December there were only 66 cases of wild polio in 2015 as compared to 324 for the same period of 2014 and it is now more than a year since the last cases in Nigeria (and by extension, Africa) – a tremendous achievement. However, the job is not yet done and efforts must be strengthened for the last push globally.

The UK remains firmly committed to eradicating polio and is a leader in the global effort. With a cumulative investment of more than £720 million, the UK is the third largest donor to polio eradication, and is providing £300 million for 2013 to 2019. The UK is also the largest donor to Gavi – the Vaccine Alliance; which has provided critical support to the rapid global introduction of the Inactivated Polio Vaccine, a major instrument in the final stages of eradication.

UK support has helped bring us one step closer to the finish line of a world free from this terrible disease, something people across this country can be immensely proud of.

*Yours
Nick.*

NICK HURD