



The Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London
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28 January 2008

Dear Foreign Secretary,

I am concerned about your announcement on 23 January that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is planning to reduce the resources it puts towards science and innovation. I hope that you will reconsider this move as science underpins many of the diplomatic issues facing the UK today and is a HMG priority.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office needs to develop its capacity to use scientific advice to inform its priority areas of work. Appointing a departmental Chief Scientific Adviser and maintaining a team of scientific advisers located in London and in key diplomatic missions overseas would enable the FCO to better utilise the scientific community's expertise on counter-terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change. It would also help the FCO to strengthen the ability of international institutions to use scientific and technical expertise and develop evidence-based policy.

I understand that the management and funding of the FCO's Science & Innovation (S&I) Network is currently under review. The S&I Network provides a vital service for the UK's scientific community, which would fall within your new strategy's aims of supporting HMG's priorities and British interests. The S&I Network should be maintained to provide both scientific advice to the FCO and to promote the UK's scientific interests overseas.

I look forward to hearing from you about your proposed plans for science and innovation within the department. I hope that you take the opportunity to make science a central component of the FCO's work and appoint a departmental Chief Scientific Adviser to ensure that this happens. If you would like, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Dusic
Director