



BY E-MAIL

Senator Jim Perchard,
Chairman, Corporate Services Scrutiny Sub-Panel,
Scrutiny Office,
Morier House,
Halkett Place,
St. Helier,
Jersey,
JE1 1DD.

19th January 2007.

Dear Senator Perchard,

Corporate Services Scrutiny Sub-Panel Review of Jersey's Overseas Aid

I am alarmed at the prospect of the States agreeing to any further large increases in the budget of the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission (JOAC).

At the beginning of last August, I was responsible for bringing to the attention of the public the news that the JOAC had rejected applications by Christian Aid and UNICEF for emergency aid for the crisis in Lebanon. The JOAC claimed that Lebanon had "*a developed infrastructure*" and was not a third world country, which meant that it was "*not within the Commissions remit to fund such areas*" (both quotes from an e-mail dated 31st July 2006 sent to me by the Commission's Committee Clerk).

However, I forwarded to the Commission evidence from their most recently published annual report (for 2005) which showed that during that year, the Commission (or its predecessor, the Overseas Aid Committee) had given development aid (not emergency aid) worth more than £0.5 million, to eleven countries which were ranked as either more developed than Lebanon (and the Palestinian Occupied Territories for which I was also appealing for emergency assistance), or were approximately equal to them, according to two major recognised indices- the Human Development Index and UNICEF's Under Age 5

Mortality tables. You will find the statistics I compiled attached separately to this e-mail in the form of a two-page spreadsheet.

Nevertheless, in a subsequent BBC Spotlight news report broadcast on 2nd August (for which both myself and Commission Chairman Deputy Jacqui Huet were interviewed), the confusing impression was given by Mrs. Huet that in terms of *development* aid at least, there was nothing to prevent Lebanon (or any other country for that matter) receiving grant aid from the Commission via an agency, regardless of how it was ranked in terms of human development. "*We have no places that we say we don't go*", she told the BBC.

The only conclusion I could draw from Deputy Huet's words in that interview was that the JOAC did **not** consider the relative wealth of a country when allocating development aid (or "*grant aid to agencies*" as it calls it), which traditionally makes up at least four fifths of the Overseas Aid budget, but conversely, it **did** consider a country's development ranking when distributing emergency aid, which forms only a tiny proportion of allocated funds. This seems illogical to me; it would seem that there is no internal safeguard to prevent approximately four fifths of the Commission's annual budget from being misused on projects for the benefit of countries that are not under-developed in any sense of the word. Yet when a country is hit by a sudden humanitarian disaster, the Commission decides to strictly judge that country according to its development ranking (but will not reveal which development ranking it is referring to) and will not hesitate to turn down the application even if organisations like the United Nations have launched a major appeal for funds, as was the situation last Summer in respect of both Lebanon and the Palestinian Occupied Territories. I would argue that this policy should be reversed- we do not need to be looking so strictly at a country's development ranking for the purposes of giving a one-off emergency aid grant, whereas we do need to be taking more notice of this when considering more long-term funding, which is, after all, development aid.

There are important questions that remain unanswered as a result of this revelation: When did the Commission decide on this policy and is there a record of it? Certainly I have been unable to find any official evidence of it but I have been hampered because it appears that the Commission does not believe in the principles of open government otherwise it would publish the minutes of its meetings for all to see. Rather conveniently, Deputy Huet's announcement on 2nd August meant that she did not have to explain why those eleven countries, some of which were ranked far higher than Lebanon in terms of development, were allocated more than £0.5 million in funds during 2005.

There is an undemocratic air of secrecy surrounding the Commission, which ought to be challenged. For example, although all members of the Commission have, in theory at least, equal voting powers over States funds worth millions of pounds, the home addresses and photographs of the three members who are not elected politicians are not published anywhere. Even its procedures for inviting applications from agencies are unacceptable when compared to States

Departments: on its website, on a page with the subtitle '*Grant Aid Administration*', it declares: "*Applications must be submitted on the Commission's grants applications form, obtainable from the Executive Officer. Copies of the form must NOT be passed to third parties.*" Might I ask why on earth not? Is the Commission or its Executive Officer trying to regulate which agencies it would prefer to receive applications from and prevent possible applications from those it would rather not deal with?

Finally, whilst compiling my statistics, I was hampered by the difficulty in obtaining copies of the historic annual reports. Until your own Scrutiny website recently published the last six years of reports, these were completely unavailable on the internet, and to this day, I have not come across any annual reports published on the Commission's own website, which seems to serve little other purpose beyond a public relations exercise. I was further disappointed to discover that several historic annual reports were not even filed at the Jersey Library.

With so little effort paid to freedom of information, one would be tempted to ask if the Commission has something it wishes to hide.

Yours sincerely,

J. Gosselin.

Table 1: Comparison of eleven countries which received Jersey Overseas Aid donations during 2005 according to their 2003 Human Development Index (HDI) Rank and Value

Example: the country at the top of the chart (Costa Rica- No. 47) is ranked as being the best developed while the country at the bottom of the chart (Palestinian Occupied Territories- No. 102) is ranked as the least developed

The positions of Lebanon and the Palestinian Occupied Territories have been included for comparison purposes

Country	HDI Rank	HDI Value	Amount (£)	Aid Organisation	Description (from 2005 report)
Costa Rica	47	0.838	35,168	Reason	"Child abuse"
Mexico	53	0.814	33,664	Teartund	"Enhancing food security"
Brazil	63	0.792	20,700	Lepra	"Adapted footwear for disability"
" "	" "	" "	7,500	Lepra	"Solidarity in ulcer care"
Romania	64	0.792	34,850	Sense	"Preschool intervention for deafblind children"
" "	" "	" "	13,000	Friends of Ecce Homo Trust	"Construction of a small farm dwelling"
" "	" "	" "	22,500	Global Care	"Independent Living"
Dominica	70	0.783	50,000	Hope and Homes	"New life for special needs children"
Albania	72	0.78	48,000	UNICEF	"First Year of 2005 3 year project- Sanitation for child development centres"
" "	" "	" "	25,350	Sue Ryder Care	"Clinical equipment for hospice"
" "	" "	" "	15,000	CRY	"Resource Centre"
" "	" "	" "	12,805	CRY	"Playground facility"
Ukraine	78	0.766	48,820	Plan UK	School construction
" "	" "	" "	13,794	CRY	"Replacement lighting for blind school"
" "	" "	" "	16,994	CRY	"Centre for Social Care"
Peru	79	0.762	32,732	Sense	"Employment opportunities for deafblind adults"
Lebanon	81	0.759	0	Not Applicable	No Jersey Overseas Aid donations during 2005
Ecuador	82	0.759	18,963	Orphanids	"Palliative care doctor, Nicola Bailhache"
Armenia	83	0.759	61,750	OXFAM	"First Year of 2005 3 year project- Women carpet weavers"
" "	" "	" "	58,575	OXFAM	"Integrated poverty reduction"
Philippines	84	0.758	12,304	One World Action	"Fish production programme"
Palestinian Occupied Territories	102	0.729	0	Not Applicable	No Jersey Overseas Aid donations during 2005
			582,469		

Comparison of eleven countries which received Jersey Overseas Aid donations during 2005 according to their 2002 UNICEF 'Under Age 5 Mortality' Rank

Example: the country at the top of the chart (Philippines- No. 88) is ranked as being the least developed while the country at the bottom of the chart (Costa Rica- No. 140) is ranked as the best developed

The positions of Lebanon and the Palestinian Occupied Territories have been included for comparison purposes

Country	UNICEF		Details of Jersey Overseas Aid Donations in 2005	
	Under Age 5 Mortality Rank	Amount (£)	Aid Organisation	Description (from 2005 report)
Philippines	88	12,304	One World Action	"Fish production programme"
Brazil	88	20,700	Lepra	"Adapted footwear for disability"
" "		7,500	Lepra	"Solidarity in ulcer care"
Armenia	90	61,750	OXFAM	"First Year of 2005 3 year project- Women carpet weavers"
" "		58,575	OXFAM	"Integrated poverty reduction"
Lebanon	93		Not Applicable	No Jersey Overseas Aid donations during 2005
Peru	97	32,732	Sense	"Employment opportunities for deafblind adults"
Mexico	98	33,664	Tearfund	"Enhancing food security"
Ecuador	104	18,963	Orphanids	"Palliative care doctor, Nicola Bailhache"
Palestinian Occupied Territories	107		Not Applicable	No Jersey Overseas Aid donations during 2005
Romania	120	34,850	Sense	"Preschool intervention for deafblind children"
" "		13,000	Friends of Ecco Homo Trust	"Construction of a small farm dwelling"
" "		22,500	Global Care	"Independent Living"
" "		50,000	Hope and Homes	"New life for special needs children"
Albania	125	25,350	Sue Ryder Care	"Clinical equipment for hospice"
" "		15,000	CRY	"Resource Centre"
" "		12,805	CRY	"Playground facility"
" "		48,820	Plan UK	"School construction"
Ukraine	127	13,794	CRY	"Replacement lighting for blind school"
" "		16,994	CRY	"Centre for Social Care"
Dominica	135	48,000	UNICEF	"First Year of 2005 3 year project- Sanitation for child development centres"
Costa Rica	140	35,168	Reason	"Child abuse"
		582,469		