

SCRUTINY PANEL - OVERSEAS AID REVIEW

With respect, I offer the following brief points for the panel's consideration in support of upgrading the Island's Overseas Aid budget in line with GNI.

(a) The major arguments against upgrading aid are that: (i) Jersey's aid quality makes up for the present lower amount (ii) Jersey is not a nation therefore the 0.7% target is irrelevant (iii) Jersey's private generosity more than make up for any shortfall in States' contributions (iv) Increasing aid will be at the expense of local needs (v) Jersey's per capita contribution compares favourably with other jurisdictions.

I have read Brian Coutanche's answering arguments to these and I fully support them finding them both reasonable and also totally convincing. They underline fundamental points that governments have ignored for too long.

(b) Another reason for my supporting upgrading is that I was one of those Jersey people who received Red Cross parcels during the occupation. I remain exceedingly grateful that this organisation did not stint on aid. It seems to me that the Island as a whole, just like the deeply thankful individuals of that era, should never forget this generosity and one way of showing appreciation is to take every opportunity to help those in need. One current opportunity is to upgrade official aid.

(c) Terrorism finds poverty excellent recruiting ground. Increasing aid, therefore, combats more than just poverty.

(d) Aid is not just a kindly act. It is an investment. The more aid the developing world receives the more likely it is that it will develop economically and so provide markets for our industries and demands for our expertise, including the kind that is provided by our own finance industry. This is sometimes referred to as "enlightened selfishness".

(e) The poorer the community the more likely it is to contribute to global warming by burning forests, polluting the sea and remaining ignorant of antidotes to environmental poisoning. It is now generally accepted that more resources must be transferred from north to south if we are to avoid the worst that global warming can inflict. Once again, increasing aid is an investment in a healthier future.

Cyd Le Bail.