



# Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Human Rights & Democracy Department  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
London, SW1A 2AH

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James Collins, CEO  
Progressio  
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Broomgrove Road  
London, SW9 9TL

Sent by email - [James@progressio.org.uk](mailto:James@progressio.org.uk)

10 November 2016

Dear Mr Collins,

Thank you for your letter of 12 October to the Prime Minister enclosing a petition from Progressio supporters concerning the UK's involvement in the UN Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. I am replying on behalf of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Human Rights & Democracy Department which covers Business and Human Rights (BHR) policy.

We welcome Progressio's continued commitment to business and human rights and briefly setting out the UK government's position. Following the publication of the UK's updated National Action Plan in May our aim has been to build on the UK's global leadership and promote wider implementation of the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs). In order to try to achieve that we use a range of tools – from diplomatic activity in multilateral fora and with individual governments to project and programme work. Several projects supported by the Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy are currently under way.

You asked about the UK's participation in the second session of the IGWG – which took place from 24 -28 October. I can confirm that an official from the UK Mission to the United Nations<sup>1</sup> in Geneva represented the UK. Our decision to participate was made possible because some of our concerns about the process and scope of the IGWG had been addressed. However, we remain to be convinced of the necessity of a legally binding treaty and will continue to carefully consider the issue in light of how the process develops.

Sincerely,

*S Khan*  
FCO Human Rights & Democracy Department