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cc. Rt Hon. Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills  
Rt Hon. Alistair Darling MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Rt Hon. Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for International Development

11 November 2009

Dear Foreign Secretary,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the United Nations Association of the UK (UNA-UK) to urge the government to make every effort to bring the current negotiations on a review mechanism for the UN Convention against Corruption to an early and successful conclusion. Clearly, for the convention to be effective, it needs to contain a mechanism which, with the full involvement of civil society, will help to verify that countries properly implement the commitments they have entered into, including repatriation of stolen assets. We would therefore hope that the government will continue to strongly back the establishment of such a mechanism.

We would also urge the government to bring forward to Parliament without further delay the Bribery Bill, and to accept the recommendations of the Joint Committee of both Houses, which have given the bill pre-legislative scrutiny.

UNA-UK has in the past been critical of the government's record in this field, particularly in the context of the decision to halt the investigation into the BAE Systems contract with Saudi Arabia. There is now a real opportunity for Britain to give a lead both externally and internally on these matters, which are of such great importance to the cause of development and of better governance worldwide. We hope the government will seize it.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick  
Chair, UNA-UK