



UNA-UK

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Dear Mark,

I am writing to you as Chair of the United Nations Association of the UK (UNA-UK) to convey our deep concern about the rising incidence of acts of piracy in the waters around the Horn of Africa. Perhaps the most shocking incident has been the seizure of a ship chartered by the UN World Food Programme to convey supplies of foodstuffs to Somalia's famine-afflicted population.

UNA-UK strongly supports efforts that are being made to confront this challenge, particularly by the UN International Maritime Organization; we welcome Security Council resolution 1816 which authorised the use of force against acts of piracy in that region; and we also welcome the efforts by the French government to give a lead in assembling a multinational task-force to give effect to that resolution.

We hope that the British government will give its full support to all these efforts and will be ready to participate, however modestly, in such a task-force. We feel that a refusal to do that, by the country which did so much in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to rid the world of the scourge of piracy, would not be understood and could not be justified. Moreover, failure by the international community now to act forcibly to stamp out piracy in the waters around the Horn of Africa would only offer encouragement to similar outrages in other parts of the world, with direct damage to this country's interest as a major trading nation. At a time when the UN is being hampered in dealing with several serious crises it is surely important not to back away from dealing with one whose handling is not contentious and has already been authorised by the Security Council.

UNA-UK very much hopes that you will be able to give a quick and positive response to these representations.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Secretaries of State for Defence, International Development and Transport.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick  
Chair, UNA-UK

cc: Rt Hon. Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for International Development  
Rt Hon. Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence  
Rt Hon. Ruth Kelly MP, Secretary of State for Transport