

February 2, 2011

Dear Secretariat,

As a young Australian, it is hard to oversee a prominent culture within this amazing nation, being that of generosity and helping out a friend in need. A great example of this is the recent flood disasters in Queensland and the way Australians pull together to support in any way possible including financial, volunteer and resourceful support. Australia's contribution to international aid should therefore be a reflection of this generosity and giving spirit.

Australia's reactive and 'issue bandaging' nature in aid sees the impact of many disasters lessened; however, I fear that the misuse and ill-guidance of this tendency often hinders our focus on constructive contributions to true community development and progress.

Please do not misunderstand my intentions in writing this, as I am a great believer in disaster relief and contributions towards immediate situations. I am more directly asking that there be a greater emphasis on lasting development. I believe that the three areas of development that will build a lasting difference upon poverty and international aid include:

- **Children/maternal health & education**
- **Debt recovery & economic sustainability**
- **Government & corruption**

Aid should be delivered through monetary & resource contribution, but also through partnering with nations to support them, not intruding and forcing change, but rather embracing their difference in culture and joining with them to best see the previously mentioned needs met and relieved.

Many would say these thoughts and ideas are the naive views of a university student who believes change can happen and the world can be a better place. Although many of this may be true, the ability to believe for something great is often the only thing standing between us and actually making a mark on poverty. To think that another nation's issues are not our problem, actually in turn creates more issues for our nation through the increase of numbers of refugees & illegal immigrants, the very thing that Australian population has had such uproar against in the most recent election.

I ask that you consider these thoughts in your review.

Many Regards,

Christina O'Brien