



DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
70 WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AS

From the Deputy Prime Minister

16 March 2012

Dear Mr Tomlinson

Thank you for your letter of 22 December 2011 asking for my thoughts on your initiative for commemorating the events that led to the freedom won by Africans in the Caribbean. Please accept my apologies for the considerable delay in replying. The slave trade was a terrible point in British history and your commitment to keeping alive the memories of those who fought against it is admirable.

Firstly, I would like to reinforce that this Government is committed to working to combat racial discrimination, and promoting equality for all. I want to make sure that we do everything we can to ensure that all of our communities prosper and acknowledge the efforts of the Windrush Foundation in working towards this shared goal.

An example of current Government efforts is Communities Minister, Andrew Stunell's ongoing review which is considering difficulties faced by Black and Minority Ethnic businesses and community groups accessing finance. You may be aware that this is an issue which has a disproportionate effect on Black African and Black Caribbean communities in particular. Andrew Stunell's report, due before the summer, will propose measures aimed at improving this. The Department for Communities and Local Government recently detailed the work that they are doing to increase social mobility and promote entrepreneurship in disadvantaged communities more broadly, when they published the Government's approach to integration. This report is available at www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/2092103.pdf

You have asked why your particular initiative has not received funding in light of Government support for Holocaust Memorial Day. Whilst the Government recognises the importance of *the International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition*, it would not be appropriate to make comparisons in this area. The Government took a conscious decision to focus on events around the Holocaust and thereafter, although it did examine requests to