

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT 2002

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SUMMARY

3. In 1997 the Government published the White Paper on International Development: *“Eliminating World Poverty - A Challenge for the 21st Century”* (Command Number 3789). That White Paper set out the Government’s contribution towards the elimination of global poverty, and committed the Government to consider the case for replacing the principal legislation in this area – the Overseas Development and Co-operation Act 1980 (“the 1980 Act”).
4. The Act gives legislative form to the policies set out in the White Paper by authorising the Secretary of State to incur expenditure on assistance for certain specified purposes.
5. Under the Act the Secretary of State may provide any of the following:
 - development assistance to any country or territory outside the United Kingdom, if she is satisfied that the provision of the assistance is likely to contribute to a reduction in poverty;
 - development assistance to any British overseas territory;
 - assistance to alleviate the effects of a disaster or other emergency on the population of any country or territory outside the United Kingdom.
6. The Act defines "development assistance" as assistance given for the purpose of:
 - furthering sustainable development in one or more countries outside the United Kingdom, or
 - improving the welfare of the population of such countries.
7. The Act provides for the Secretary of State to take steps which enable her to prepare for, and will otherwise facilitate, the provision of assistance under the Act. It also allows the Secretary of State to support organisations which undertake activities which are likely to contribute to the reduction of world poverty.
8. The Act enables the Secretary of State to support activities that promote the awareness of and understanding of global poverty. Prior to the coming into force of the Act, such activities will have been supported by the Secretary of State on the basis of the Appropriation Act.
9. The Act enables the use of a wider range of financial instruments in the provision of development assistance than have been available under the 1980 Act. The range includes share-holdings and convertible instruments, options and guarantees.
10. The Act enables named statutory bodies to engage on their own or with the Secretary of State in the provision of assistance overseas. It also contains provision requiring governmental consent to be given before such bodies can engage in such activity, and provision as to the terms upon which they can provide development assistance.

*These notes refer to the International Development Act 2002
(c.1) which received Royal Assent on 26 February 2002*

11. The Act provides for payments to be made to multilateral development banks, and contains provisions concerning the immunities and privileges of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Association.
12. The Act provides for the continuance of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission.