

**Document 1: Email between FCO and Treasury: 27 April 2009 14:18**

(Name omitted /HMT)

Could you have a look at the Lords question and answer below? Are you able to clear this text, for either (name omitted) or (name omitted) (EST) to use on Wednesday? Please feel free to make any additions or amendments.

Many thanks

(name omitted/ FCO)

(HMT response)

27 April 2009 14:18

How do the Government reconcile the policy of using military force and UK naval resources to prevent piracy off the Horn of Africa with a simultaneous policy of turning a blind eye to monies being paid from the UK as ransom to the pirates and quite possibly being directed to terrorism?

- Firstly, we are not currently aware of any evidence that suggests that the proceeds of piracy are being directed towards terrorism. If the payer of the ransom had any grounds to suspect that the pirates were funding terrorism, then payment of the ransom would be illegal under the Terrorism Act 2000 (which criminalises the financing of terrorism) and they would have to apply to SOCA for consent to make the payment.
- If evidence comes to light that piracy is financing terrorism, we will be in a position to take further action against these payments and the criminals who receive them.
- Use of military force to prevent piracy is not inconsistent with non-illegality of the payment of ransoms. Naval deployment in the region is intended to protect British ships and personnel from pirate attacks. The UK government does not condone the payment of ransoms, but nor is it illegal under British law. If a private company assesses that this is appropriate to protect its employees, then this is undertaken with the objective to secure the safe release of hostages. There is no conflict of policy in this approach. The wider questions of aiming to reduce the instance of piracy and recovering or tracking the funds that pirates gain needs to be undertaken in conjunction with international partners, and the FCO is working to secure the engagement of regional governments on the issue.