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2 March 2012

Freedom of Information (FOI) request: FCO Reference Number 0019-12

Thank you for your e-mail of 6th January asking:

“the full cost to British taxpayers of the trip to Burma undertaken by William Hague MP and others, in January 2012”.

I can confirm that the FCO holds information relevant to your reply.

The total cost to the FCO of the visit of the Foreign Secretary and his delegation to Burma in January 2012 was **£98,738.93**. The security and logistical challenges associated with this visit were significant which had implications for the overall costs. In particular the options available were limited by the policy need to visit Naypyidaw and Rangoon sequentially and constraints on the use of local airlines. Nevertheless we are confident the costs of this visit represented value for money.

The objectives of the Foreign Secretary's visit were:

- To meet senior Burmese figures, including the Government in Naypyidaw, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her home in Rangoon, and ethnic leaders including former political prisoners.
- To promote an end to the conflict in Burma and to urge further democratic reform including the release of all political prisoners and full humanitarian access, and to signal the importance Britain attaches to these issues
- To set out clearly the changes that the British government would want to see before we could support the lifting of EU sanctions, or a closer relationship with the UK.

During the visit the Foreign Secretary secured commitments from the Burmese government that the reforms would continue, that further political prisoner releases would go ahead and that by-elections would be free and fair. The Burmese President acknowledged the need for humanitarian assistance in conflict areas and the release of political prisoners. We have since seen significant changes on the ground, most notably prisoner releases.

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