

### **United States Alien Tort Statute**

**The Minister for Trade and Investment (Mr. Mike O'Brien):** The British Government oppose all unwarranted assertions of extra-territorial jurisdiction in commercial cases. Such assertions infringe on the sovereign right of states to regulate activities within their own territory, interfere with the freedom of states to conduct their own economic policies, place an unwarranted burden on businesses, and can create a climate of uncertainty which may affect the trading and investment conditions of British companies.

A number of cases have been brought under the United States Alien Tort Statute against British companies and others in relation to their activities in third countries. Of particular concern are cases brought in the US against British companies in relation to their activities in South Africa during the Apartheid era, alleging that their presence in South Africa at the time made them complicit in human rights abuses.

The British Government have expressed to the US Government their concerns over the extra-territorial use of the Alien Tort Statute in these commercial cases. The US Government have filed an amicus brief in a related case brought under the Statute, seeking to address this issue among others.

The British Government remain committed to combating impunity for human rights violations wherever they occur. We believe that the most effective means of achieving this goal is the strengthening and developing of credible national justice mechanisms that conform to international human rights standards. We believe that, in the first instance, legal remedies in the country where the act allegedly took place should be exhausted. In the Apartheid cases this does not appear to have happened. Moreover, South Africa is engaged in an ongoing post-Apartheid reconciliation process, the complexities of which should not be under-estimated. We believe that the South African Government is best placed and best capable of dealing with the issue of reparations for crimes under Apartheid.

### **TRANSPORT**

#### **Transport for London**

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Tony McNulty):** I have today placed a list in the Libraries of both Houses, which details all the major land assets that Transport for London inherited from London Regional Transport today.

### **CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**

#### **Draft Gambling Bill**

**The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell):** I have