



Scotland Office

An Oifis na h-Albainn

Constitutional Policy Branch
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Mr Craig Murray
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Website: www.scotlandoffice.gov.uk

Our ref: OR 14/4007

29th July 2014

Dear Mr Murray

SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM

Thank you for your correspondence to the Prime Minister on 6th June. This query was passed to the Scotland Office as this office has responsibility for issues relating to Scotland's constitutional future. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you, this was due to an administrative error.

With regard to your query, President Obama was asked a question about what the decisions on Scottish independence meant to him and the American people during a media conference following the G7 Summit on 4th-5th June 2014. Mr Obama responded to that question, and I've provided a copy of that text below for your information:

"There is a referendum process in place and it is up to the people of Scotland. The United Kingdom has been an extraordinary partner to us. From the outside at least, it looks like things have worked pretty well. And we obviously have a deep interest in making sure that one of the closest allies we will ever have remains a strong, robust, united and effective partner. But ultimately these are decisions that are to be made by the folks there."

As a United Kingdom we are forecast to have the strongest growth in the G7 this year. Together we have a strong and stable currency that has the respect of the international markets. We have a truly single jobs market with no barriers to movement, national insurance, tax or pensions. In 2012, Scotland sold £48 billion of goods and services to the rest of the UK while buying £60 billion worth of goods from the rest of the UK, demonstrating the contribution Scotland makes to the UK economy.

For these reasons and many more, the UK Government is clear that the United Kingdom is stronger with Scotland in it, and Scotland is stronger within the United Kingdom. The Government is clear that as part of the UK, Scotland has the best of both worlds: a Scottish Parliament that can take decisions in Scotland on issues like education, health and policing, while remaining part of a larger UK that gives us greater strength and security.

To inform and support the debate on Scotland's future, the UK Government has undertaken a programme of analysis on Scotland as part of the UK, and how it contributes to and benefits from being part of the United Kingdom. This work is known as the Scotland analysis programme and each of the papers is available to read online here: www.gov.uk/scotlandanalysis

In addition to the Scotland analysis programme, the Scotland Office has produced a short leaflet that brings together all of the key facts about Scotland within the UK that you can access here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scottish-independence-referendum-scotland-in-the-uk>

In direct response to demands from the public for simple, factual information in a clear format, the UK Government recently delivered a booklet on the case for Scotland within the UK to all households in Scotland. This booklet can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-staying-in-the-united-kingdom-means-for-scotland>

The Government recognises the enormity of the decision that the people in Scotland will make in September and in the remaining weeks until the referendum, the UK Government will continue to make the positive case to keep Scotland in the UK.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Lopinska', written in a cursive style.

Emma Lopinska
Scotland Office