

## **If these allegations are true, British taxpayers will be rightly outraged – Osamor**

**Kate Osamor MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for International Development**, commenting on allegations that the British aid budget has contributed towards human rights violations and terrorist groups in Syria, to be aired tonight following a six month Panorama investigation, said:

"Spent properly, Britain's aid budget achieves incredible results and we must not shy away from working in conflict-affected countries. But if these allegations are true, British taxpayers will be rightly outraged.

"We need to understand how the Foreign and Commonwealth Office allowed this to happen, and why their mechanisms for properly managing aid projects failed. The opaque Conflict, Stability and Security Fund that financed this project also operates in 70 other countries – many with questionable human rights records.

"This investigation is likely to be only the tip of the iceberg: the Government must now open up its books so the public can understand the true extent of the problem."

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## **A 700,000 increase in the number of children and older people in poverty is totally unacceptable – Abrahams**

**Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary**, commenting on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation state of the nation report, said:

"A 700,000 increase in the number of children and older people in poverty is totally unacceptable.

"The last seven

years of flat-lining wages and austerity cuts, now combined with sharply rising costs of household essentials is a truly terrifying prospect for millions trying to make ends meet. The cuts to Universal Credit, which were not addressed in the recent Budget and mean that 'work does not always pay', will push even more children and working age adults into poverty.

"Even the Government's own social mobility commission has resigned over their failure to act.

"The Prime Minister should stand aside, and let Labour deliver a £10 an hour minimum wage, end zero hour contracts, transform our social security system and build the genuinely affordable homes Britain needs."

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## [Tories' record on children & young people's mental health has been shocking – Keeley](#)

**Barbara**

**Keeley MP, Labour's Shadow Cabinet Minister for Mental Health**, commenting on the announcement of measures contained within the new Children and Young People's Green Paper, said:

"This announcement leaves many unanswered questions, in particular whether the reported funding will amount to new investment and whether the incentives offered will lead to every school being able to offer proper mental health support to their pupils.

"What is clear, however, is that the Tories' record on children and young people's mental health has been shocking, with a postcode lottery of provision across Child and Adolescent Mental Health services and many long waits for treatment.

"The Tories can only be taken seriously on children and young people's mental health by following Labour's example and pledging to increase spending on these services, ring-fencing budgets and ensuring children and young people have access to a counselling service in every secondary school."

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## **Under the Tories, social mobility has totally stalled. It is no surprise the whole Social Mobility Commission has resigned in frustration – Trickett**

**Jon**

**Trickett MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office**, responding to the resignation of the Social Mobility Commission board, said:

"As inequality has grown under the Tories, social mobility has totally stalled. Theresa May has rewarded the rich whilst holding everyone else back. It is no surprise the whole Social Mobility Commission has resigned in frustration.

"Under the Tories, how well people do in life is still based on class background rather than on talent or effort.

"Labour will change our country so it works for the many not the few."

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## **RBS priority should be serving the best interests of UK customers – Reynolds**

**Jonathan Reynolds MP, Labour's Shadow City Minister**, responding to the RBS jobs cuts announcement, said:

"The decision by RBS to close 1 in 4 of its outlets is hugely disappointing. Not only will this result in the potential loss of 1,000 jobs, but many people depend on being able to use bank branch facilities in person. As the taxpayer continues to own 71% of the bank, its priority should be serving the best interests of UK customers.

"We are astounded that the Government has signed off on these proposals and urge them to reconsider such a drastic move which risks serious harm to local communities. Labour will change bank regulations to stop branch closures

where there is a clear impact on local communities and businesses.”