



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

**Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon**  
Minister of State for South Asia and  
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Prime Minister's Special  
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Professor Wendy Thomson  
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*Dear Vice-Chancellor,*

You will already have received many messages of concern from both the UK and the wider Commonwealth about the proposed closure of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

In my capacity as Minister for the Commonwealth, I am aware of the important role the Institute has played in fostering a greater understanding, particularly a contemporary understanding, of the Commonwealth both within the FCDO and in the wider world. This is particularly important at a time when the UK is seeking to deepen its relationship with the Commonwealth following its departure from the European Union.

While recognising the financial difficulties facing the University of London and the School of Advanced Study, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, I hope a solution can be found which recognises the value of an academic institute located in London with mandate and means to be a focus for study of the Commonwealth.

*Yours sincerely,*

**LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON**  
Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth  
Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict