

The Campaign to Revoke War Criminal Tony Blair's 'Global Legacy' Award. Save the Children (STC) Responds and "Apologizes"

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In November 2014, [Tony Blair was given a 'global legacy' award](#) for his anti-poverty work by US branch of Save The Children.

The next day, 38 Degrees member Miranda Pinch [started a petition calling on the award to be revoked](#), pointing out *"As an international children's charity the choice of Tony Blair is controversial to say the least, as many see him as the cause of the deaths of countless children in the Middle East with damning allegations relating to his role as Middle East envoy and businesses dealings with autocratic rulers and others in the region."*

The petition quickly grew and [gained headline news](#), over 120,000 people eventually signed. On the 13th January Miranda delivered the petition to the Save The Children UK offices and had a meeting with Brendan Cox, Director of Policy and Advocacy at Save The Children UK.

Here is Brendan Cox's full official response to the petition:

"We wanted to respond to you and your fellow signatories and to apologise for the upset that this award has caused.

As you know, this was a decision made by Save the Children US and although we were made aware of the decision, and we passed on the invite to his office at their request, we weren't part of the decision making process. In retrospect we should have foreseen the controversy this might generate.

For a number of reasons this is not a decision Save UK would have taken.

This isn't because Tony Blair doesn't deserve recognition for the leadership he showed on Africa - he does - but because his other actions, particularly those on Iraq which Save the Children opposed strongly at the time, overshadow how the public see him in the UK.

In the US his public profile is very different and therefore it's possible to disentangle his actions on Africa from his broader track record. In the UK this is more difficult

The intent behind the Save USA award was to incentivise and recognise political leadership on development. In the world at this moment this is sorely lacking with very few leaders looking beyond short term domestic priorities. This award from them was never intended to be a broad endorsement of Tony Blair's time in office but specific

recognition for his role in the Birmingham and Gleneagles G8 summits and commitment to development and Africa. These summits played an important role in galvanising progress on child and maternal mortality, debt cancellation and HIV/ AIDs.

Finally, we wanted to reassure you that work is ongoing within the global Save the Children movement to look at what lessons can be learnt as we want nothing to distract us from our work to make this world a better place for children and their families.

Our first and only interest has always been to do what's in the best interests of children and we hope to work together with many of you in the future on this critical cause - saving children's lives and helping them fulfil their potential."

Brendan Cox

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