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Dear Prime Minister,

Congratulations on your recent electoral victory; the Association of International Accountants (AIA) stands ready to work with the government to deliver important reform over a broad range of areas.

Established in 1928, AIA is a leading professional body for accountants and finance professionals with a long-standing reputation for excellence in professional education and a dynamic global membership. Based in the United Kingdom, AIA has an established history of improving professional skills and ethical standards across the sector; our members are recognised, respected, and regulated. AIA's commitment to protecting the public interest and advancing professional standards is evident through our respected qualifications portfolio, robust membership requirements and the production of research, best practice, and skills guidance.

We encourage the government to take swift action to encourage growth and investment and would highlight the following key areas for consideration in our sector:

- **Audit and Corporate Governance Reform**

The ongoing delay in implementation of audit and corporate governance reform must be ended to remove uncertainty and unlock growth and investment. Taking early action in this area should reduce the risk of unexpected business failure and deliver on existing commitments to reinforce the UK as a trusted destination for investment.

The government should commit to audit and corporate governance reform as a key priority, including by establishing the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA) as a new statutory regulator and granting significant powers to take effective enforcement action.

AIA supports the establishment of ARGA as a more robust regulator with the potential to take a leading role in raising audit quality, however it must also ensure that it does not widen its agenda to the point where it is not operating in a balanced, proportional, and targeted way.

As a Recognised Qualifying Body under the Companies Act 2006, we also continue to recognise our own responsibilities in offering a recognised professional qualification for audit and are committed to working with stakeholders to develop and improve the profession in which we operate.

- **Supporting Small Business and Practitioners**

Central to lasting and significant change are reforms that will strengthen the UK's position and restore both business confidence and public confidence in business. It is vital that full consideration is given to how reforms will affect SMEs – the lifeblood of the British economy – including wider reform of business rates and encouraging an end to late payments.

Small- and medium-sized accountancy practices (SMPs) also play an invaluable role in society by ensuring sound financial management, transparency, and integrity of companies as well as by contributing to tax and regulatory compliance. The work of accountants helps to build trust and confidence in the information on which capital markets rely, benefiting both the organisations they serve and the broader public interest. SMPs are vital partners of SMEs in the journey of transition, helping SMEs navigate financial resilience, technological advancements, and sustainable practices.

It is essential that any policy or regulation that impacts, directly or otherwise, SMEs and SMPs be considered carefully and take full account of their views; the stability and prosperity of the economy crucially depends on the well-being of SMEs. Supporting the growth and competitiveness of SMEs and SMPs can contribute to fostering a dynamic and resilient economy and society.

- **Green Finance and Sustainability**

AIA's work to support the Sustainable Finance Education Charter (SFEC) shows our dedication to equipping members with the required tools to lead in sustainable finance. We ensure our members remain ahead of the curve, empowered with the latest knowledge and skills. We are committed engaging with policymakers, regulators, researchers, and practitioners to identify and promote impactful and effective best practices in green and sustainable finance and support national strategies.

In the long term, we would suggest that there is major potential for the government in establishing the UK as the green finance capital of the world, which could include commitments to endorse International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) reporting standards and introduce a green taxonomy, to ensure the UK remains at the forefront of developing the international sustainability reporting framework.

Our members across business and public practice stand ready to help restore and protect the natural world and tackle greenwashing.

- **Improving HMRC and raising standards**

The decline in HMRC service levels is matter of concern to AIA members and the government should prioritise action to ensure taxpayers and their advisers have access to an efficient and effective service. We look forward to discussing suggested improvements to the HMRC service and sharing the experience of our members to push forward reform.

The partnership between private and public sectors is vital to leverage the skills and knowledge of professional bodies representing their members. We look forward to continuing to work with the government in supporting the introduction of reforms intended to raise standards in the tax advice market where practical and ensure the effective implementation of the Making Tax Digital platform.

- **Regional growth and professional services**

Financial and related professional services are an engine of growth, as highlighted in the latest edition of the 'Enabling growth across the UK' report produced by TheCityUK, of which AIA is an active member. They act as an enabler for the whole economy in every region and nation of the UK, creating jobs, generating investment, and growing prosperity, with around two thirds of people in financial and related-professional services employed outside of London.

Continuing a strong partnership between policymakers and industry will enable us to play a full part in overcoming many of the barriers to growth and development experienced by regions and nations across the UK, thereby helping to deliver a sustainable future and unlocking potential in every community.

The financial and related professional services industry is a strategic national asset, providing jobs and driving growth in every region and nation of the country. AIA and its members look forward to working with the new government to support delivery on your manifesto promise to unlock stronger economic growth and ensure our industry continues to play its enabling role across the economy and in securing Britain's future success.

We look forward to working with the government to build on its stated ambitions of policy certainty, stability, and predictability, which the United Kingdom requires to boost investment, drive growth, and bolster international competitiveness.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Turnbull". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a long, sweeping horizontal flourish.

Philip Turnbull
Chief Executive