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Mr Crispin Blunt MP
House of Commons
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20 July 2015

Dear Mr. Blunt,

Please accept my congratulations on your election as the new Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I understand that you and your Committee would welcome an update on progress made by the Iraq Inquiry since I gave evidence in February this year. You will already have seen the exchange of correspondence between myself and the Prime Minister in the middle of June, which can be viewed on the Inquiry's website.

The Inquiry continues to make significant progress through Maxwellisation. Once the final responses have been received from individuals who have been given the opportunity to make representations, they must be evaluated carefully and the process concluded. At that point I shall write to the Prime Minister with a timetable for completion and delivery of our report.

Those involved in the Maxwellisation process have engaged fully, and I continue to judge that no one has taken an unreasonable length of time to respond given the range and complexity of the issues under consideration. You will appreciate, I am sure, that my ability to say more about the reasons behind that judgement is constrained by the need for fairness and therefore confidentiality throughout the Maxwellisation process.

What I said in February remains true – individuals are allowed a reasonable but not indefinite amount of time to respond to the material they have received, and my judgement of what is reasonable depends on the individual circumstances of each case.

I can also confirm that the meeting between myself and Sir Jeremy Heywood, proposed by the Prime Minister in his letter of 17 June, took place in early July. Sir Jeremy and I had a constructive discussion about some steps that can be taken now to assist us in our work and the additional assistance the Inquiry will wish to call upon in its closing stages. I am grateful for Sir Jeremy's support.

I hope that you find this update helpful.

*Yours sincerely,
Sir John Chilcot*

SIR JOHN CHILCOT