

10 October 2017

Tom Tugendhat MBE MP  
Chair  
Foreign Affairs Committee  
Committee Office  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Secretary of State

Dear Tom

Thank you for your letter of 29 September urging me to reconsider the timing of my oral evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I take the Foreign Affairs Committee's role in scrutinising the work and functions of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office extremely seriously, and am committed to the established practice that I should appear before the Committee twice each year.

I am keen to ensure we can agree dates as smoothly as possible. In January 2017, after my first appearance in October 2016, my officials offered dates for a second appearance. Unfortunately, the Committee was not able to take these up, because the calling of the General Election intervened.

I agree, therefore, that an appearance is overdue. It would be helpful if, wherever possible, you could propose a range of dates as far as possible in advance. Your team first contacted my office in mid-September to request dates for my second 2017 appearance. Given my diary commitments, including other parliamentary business such as FCO Orals, and London and overseas commitments, it was simply not possible at that notice to find an October date.

For this reason I will need to maintain my offer of 23 November. But to ensure we do not face the same issue again, I have asked my diary secretary to find an early date in May next year for our subsequent evidence session so that we can agree this early on. It would be helpful if you could offer a range of dates convenient to you.

I should add that it was good to meet the Committee for drinks in the House on 11 September. As I stressed at the meeting, I hope you and your Committee will continue to feel able to raise specific issues of concern with me on an informal basis.

**THE RT HON BORIS JOHNSON MP**