



Liaison Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 8051 Email: liaisoncommittee@parliament.uk

Website: www.parliament.uk/liaison-committee

From Dr Sarah Wollaston MP, Chair

Rt. Hon Theresa May MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA

2 July 2018

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May. The Committee looks forward to hearing from you at 3pm on 18 July. In the meantime, I would be most grateful if you could respond to the following points that relate to the reply you gave to our written questions following the last evidence session.

In your response to Question 1, you wrote that the UK-registered VTB Capital is not subject to sanctions regulations, because they only apply to non-EU VTB entities. Why was the decision taken to exclude EU-based subsidiaries of sanctioned entities from the EU sanctions regime? Did the UK support this decision, and, if so, why?

I'm afraid that your reply to our Question 3, on the grant to the BBC Monitoring Service, did not address the issue raised. It is clearly important to "ensure that the BBC's journalism can be available to Russian speakers", but this is the inverse of the work of the Monitoring Service, which gathers open source information from foreign media and freely available social media from countries around the world, and translates and analyses articles and posts from 150 countries in 100 languages. This service helps decision makers and analysts in Whitehall, among others, to be better informed about, for example, the situation in Russia. Both the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees have expressed strong concern over the effects of ending the Government's annual grant to the Monitoring Service, so I should be grateful if you would respond on this specific point.

In relation to Question 5, your response makes no mention of whether the UK-wide frameworks will be imposed post-Brexit: if they cannot be agreed with the Devolved Administrations in advance, and whether the Government would overrule the continuity legislation passed by the Scottish Parliament to do so?

On Question 7, you say that DEFRA is consulting on an environmental protection body. The legislation for that body will not be introduced until May 2019 at the earliest. What approach will you take if there is no deal agreed with the European Union and therefore no transition period during which to introduce the body?

With reference to Question 9 please can you confirm the timescale of the discussions you mention on the European Chemicals Agency and say whether or not you expect this matter to be resolved by October 2018.

Your letter made no mention of the Rohingya crisis that we asked about in question 11. I would be most grateful if you could let us know what is the UK's view of the ICC Chief Prosecutor's request for an opinion from the Court's judges as to whether the ICC has jurisdiction over the alleged illegal deportation of the Rohingya to Bangladesh and whether the receiving country being an ICC signatory 'opens the door' to proactive consideration of the case by the Court?

In addition, since I wrote, the monsoon season has begun in earnest and the refugee camps in the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh are beginning to fail; only about 22,000 of the estimated 180,000 Rohingya most at risk have been moved. Burma, ultimately, is as responsible for this second wave of misery and suffering as it was, directly, for the original ethnic cleansing and displacement. Without the threat of being held to account, there will be further crises as the emboldened Tatmadaw moves on to other ethnic minorities in Burma – as emerging evidence indicates.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Wollaston', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Sarah Wollaston MP, Chair of the Committee