



Foreign Affairs Committee

Committee Office House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 6106 Fax 020 7219 5365 Email foraffcom@parliament.uk Website www.parliament.uk

From The Chair

Rt Hon William Hague MP
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

19 April 2012

Dear William

Mr Neil Heywood

The Committee discussed yesterday the death of Mr Neil Heywood in China on 14 November 2011. We noted the information provided to the House in the Written Ministerial Statement published on Tuesday 17 April 2012 and during FCO Oral Questions.

The Committee would be grateful if you could provide further information on the FCO's handling of this case, as follows:

1. You state that Ministers should be informed of the deaths of British nationals in "relevant cases" and that the FCO would review its procedures in this regard. Could you please provide the Committee with a definition of what is a "relevant case"?
2. Was Neil Heywood a "relevant case" and, if so, at what point was he designated as such?
3. From your statement, it appears that Ministers were informed of Neil Heywood's case only after allegations were made by Wang Lijun on 6th February 2012. Why were earlier rumours about Mr Heywood's death, which reached FCO staff in January, not communicated to Ministers immediately?
4. Finally, you will be aware of speculation in the press about Mr Heywood's profession. I would be grateful if you would make clear what relationship the British Consulate-General Chongqing or the British Embassy in Beijing had with Mr Heywood before his death. For instance, did he supply the British Consulate or Embassy with information, either on a formal or informal basis?

The Committee would appreciate a response by Thursday 26th April.

Richard

Mr Richard Ottaway MP
Chair