

# Home Affairs Committee

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From the Committee Chair

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

6 March 2018

Dear Home Secretary,

## **Review of deaths with allegations of state responsibility**

During today's Urgent Question on government policy in relation to Russia, and following the incident being investigated in Salisbury, I asked the Foreign Secretary to discuss with you a review by the National Crime Agency (NCA), or another appropriate entity, into 14 deaths that have not been treated as suspicious by the UK police, but have – reportedly – been identified by United States intelligence sources as potentially connected to the Russian state.

The Foreign Secretary agreed to discuss this with you, and I am writing to request a response on these matters as soon as possible.

You will know doubt be aware of the investigative journalism from BuzzFeed alleging that US intelligence have informed the British government that a Russian whistleblower – Alexander Perepilichnyy, who died in Surrey in 2012 – was likely killed under orders by the Russian state, and that a further 13 people, including an associate of Alexander Litvinenko, Boris Berezovsky, were also likely killed on British soil. Yet the UK authorities have ruled out suspicious circumstances in these cases, often concluding that suicide or natural causes was the explanation.

The Foreign Secretary noted the Perepilichnyy case in his comments to me, calling it one of a number of “deeply troubling cases”.

You will be aware of reports of considerable concerning evidence about many of the 14 cases that raises serious doubts about the decisions made in each case to treat them either as suicides, natural causes or accidents.

This reported evidence raises questions over the robustness of the police investigations.

Surely a review of all these cases and the decisions made on them, in light of this further reported evidence, carried out by the NCA, would be a prudent course of action to ensure that – as the Foreign Secretary said today – no attempt on an innocent life on British soil should go uninvestigated or unpunished.

I am copying this letter to Director General Lynne Owens at the NCA and Commissioner Cressida Dick of the Metropolitan Police.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvette Cooper'.

**Yvette Cooper MP**