



Ministry
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Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter of 7 December. I am pleased to hear that the Committee had a useful visit to RAF Waddington on Thursday 3 December and that the personnel briefed you on some of the issues relevant to your inquiry.

As I said in my letter dated 3 December, this Government takes the need for Parliamentary scrutiny very seriously and look forward to the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on 16 December. During this session I will endeavour to answer the Committee's questions as fully as I am able noting that your review could very quickly encroach on highly classified information and national security sensitive issues. The Memorandum sent on 3 December set out the Government's response to the issues you raised in your annex. I will be happy to discuss this position further with you and the Committee on 16 December.

The Foreign Secretary, Attorney General and I have jointly decided that Government lawyers will not appear, in order to protect the principle of Legal Professional Privilege. It is important that we are able to seek legal advice in confidence, particularly in matters concerning national security. I will of course endeavour, subject to the restrictions mentioned above, to answer the Committee's questions in full.

I look forward to my appearance on 16 December.

THE RT HON MICHAEL FALLON MP

*(Signed on behalf of
the Defence Secretary,
and with his authority).*

Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP
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