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SERIOUS VIOLENCE STRATEGY

I am writing to inform you that we have today published the Government's new Serious Violence Strategy. The Government is determined to break the deadly cycle of violence that devastates the lives of individuals, families and communities. While overall crime continues to fall there has been an increase in violent crime offences recorded by the police since late 2014. The Serious Violence Strategy sets out the Government's response to recent increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide. It outlines an ambitious programme working with a range of Government Departments and partnerships across a number of sectors such as education, health, social services, housing, youth services, and victim services.

The strategy makes clear that our approach is not solely focused on law enforcement, very important as that is, but depends also on partnerships across a number of sectors. In particular, it needs the support of communities thinking about what they can themselves do to help prevent violent crime happening in the first place and how they can support measures to get young people and young adults involved in positive activities.

We know intervening early can help us catch young people before they go down the wrong path, encouraging them to make positive choices and that is why the strategy represents a step change in the way we think and respond and in particular, a shift to early intervention and prevention steering young people away from crime in the first place and put in place measures to tackle the root causes of the problem.

Action in the strategy is centred on the following key themes:

- Tackling county lines and misuse of drugs;
- Early intervention and prevention;
- Supporting communities and local partnerships; and
- Law enforcement and the criminal justice response

The strategy sets out a range of key actions we will take to tackle serious violence, building on the significant programmes of work already in place to tackle knife crime, gun crime and the acid attacks action plan I published in July last year. The strategy includes over 50 specific commitments for action in the coming months and years ahead including creation of a new National County Lines Coordination Centre, creation of a new Early Intervention Youth Fund and measures to strengthen local partnerships and the multi-agency response to this issue.

I will be overseeing implementation of the strategy through a refocused Inter-Ministerial Group on the Serious Violence Strategy and through creation of a new Serious Violence Taskforce which will include key representatives from national and local government, Police and Crime Commissioners and key delivery partners including representatives from health, education and industry. The Taskforce, will be chaired by the Home Office, and will oversee delivery of the strategy programme of work and provide a route for challenge and support on progress in tackling serious violence.

The Government is clear that there is no place in society for these horrendous crimes and anyone committing these acts of violence must feel the full force of the law. We believe that our ambitious approach set out in the strategy, with a greater emphasis on early intervention, will address violent crime and help young people to develop the skills and resilience to live happy and productive lives away from violence.

A copy of this letter and the Serious Violence Strategy will be placed in the House Library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amber Rudd', written in a cursive style.

The Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP