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The Rt Hon. the Lord Browne of Ladyton  
House of Lords  
London  
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Dear Lord Browne,

Thank you for your contribution to the oral question asked by Lord Harris of Harringey on 4 June. I am writing to you with regard to your question about the national Biological Security Strategy.

The UK Biological Security Strategy sets out how the UK deals with significant disease threats to humans, animals, environment and plants, and the less likely risk of accidental or deliberate use to cause disease. Under the auspices of the Strategy, the UK has an integrated approach to deliberate, accidental and natural biological threats that strengthens our domestic preparedness and builds resilience. This integrated and holistic approach recognises that infectious disease threats do not stop at borders and that the UK's domestic preparedness is fundamentally linked to preparedness in other countries.

It is incorrect to state that the Threats, Hazards, Resilience and Contingencies (THRC) committee never existed. THRC was a former sub-Committee of the National Security Council up until July 2019 when Cabinet Committee structures were refreshed. The Prime Minister determines the structure of Cabinet Committees, and they are refreshed when appropriate. Irrespective of this, departments continue to have responsibility for their biosecurity related programmes and workstreams and these are now shared with colleagues from across government at monthly Working Group meetings and at the more senior Governance Board which meets approximately every six months.

The work to ensure pandemic preparedness is done through existing and well known national security structures. We regularly test our pandemic plans and lessons learned from previous exercises helped us to rapidly respond to the outbreak and spread of COVID-19.

I hope this further information is helpful. I have copied this letter to Baroness Smith, and a copy of this letter will be placed in the House Library.

Yours,

**Lord True CBE**