



Foreign, Commonwealth  
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Our ref:  
Your ref:

14 December 2022

Lord Harries of Pentregarth,  
House of Lords,  
London,  
SW1A 0PW

*Dear Richard,*

I am writing to follow up on the points raised in the House of Lords on 1 December, during the debate on Ukraine and the threat of tactical nuclear weapons. Lord Hannay raised the issue of safeguarding civil nuclear installations and Lord Addington asked about golden visas and the status of the Wagner Group.

### **Safeguarding civil nuclear installations**

Russia's unprovoked and illegal war in Ukraine has created unprecedented risks to civil nuclear sites, which has drawn the world's attention to the risks arising from the vulnerability of civil nuclear sites in conflict zones. Russia is currently breaking the existing international norms and laws which apply in these circumstances. This starts with Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and continues through their reckless actions at the Ukrainian nuclear facilities, including the Chernobyl nuclear site and the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Russia's actions are contrary to the principles of the Convention of Nuclear Safety and other international nuclear safety conventions and put at jeopardy the safety of millions who would be affected by a nuclear incident in Ukraine.

We, and the international community, must hold Russia to account to uphold the existing international norms and laws, including international humanitarian law and the special protection it affords to nuclear electrical generating stations, in accordance with article 56 of Additional Protocol 1 (1977) to the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

The UK is grateful to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for their efforts to uphold the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities since the start of this conflict, while fully respecting Ukrainian sovereignty. This includes their missions to civil nuclear installations and staff presence at Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, and the Director General's initiative to seek a Nuclear Safety and Security Protection Zone at Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. We reaffirm the importance of the Director General's "Seven Pillars of Nuclear Safety and Security" and recognise their particular urgency in Ukraine.

### **Golden visas scheme**

The UK has acted against the people and entities who facilitate the war in Ukraine and the harmful activities of the Russian Government. Specifically, we have committed to taking measures to limit the sale of citizenship - so called golden passports - that let wealthy Russians connected to the Russian Government become citizens of our country and gain access to our financial systems. The golden visas scheme is closed and has been for some time. The commitment to undertake a review was given to the Home Affairs Select Committee was given by then Home Secretary Amber Rudd on 28th March 2018. A review has been undertaken and its findings played an important part in informing the decision to close this visa route in February of this year. The Home Office is currently considering what more can publicly be disclosed in terms of the findings of the review, given wider national security constraints.

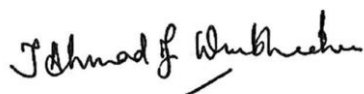
### **Wagner Group**

The Wagner Group is directly connected to the Russian state and is operating in Ukraine in support of the Russian invasion. The UK condemns Russia's use of such proxies in Ukraine. We have designated both the Wagner Group and its leader Yevgeny Prigozhin, under the Russia Sanctions Regime.

Whilst we keep the list of proscribed organisations under review, it is Government policy not to comment on whether a group is under consideration for proscription. To proscribe an organisation, the Home Secretary must have a reasonable belief that it is concerned in terrorism. This means the organisation participates or commits; prepares for; promotes, encourages or unlawfully glorifies; or is in some way otherwise concerned in terrorism. As well as considering whether the statutory test for proscription has been satisfied, the Home Secretary's decision to proscribe must be necessary and proportionate, having taken into account all relevant factors.

I hope this information is helpful. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Lords library.

*Yours sincerely,*



**LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON**

Minister of State

Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict