



Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent  
Parliamentary Secretary and  
Baroness-in-Waiting [Government Whip]  
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS

By email:

The Baroness Finn  
The Lord Bellingham  
The Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE KC  
The Lord Evans of Rainow  
The Rt Hon. the Lord Rooker  
The Rt Hon. the Baroness May of Maidenhead

24 March 2026

My Lords,

Following the statement repeat in your Lordship's house relating to the arrest of three individuals under the National Security Act (2023) on 4 March 2026, I committed to responding to your questions that I was unable to answer at the time.

**The noble Baroness, Lady Finn** asked for additional detail on steps noble Lords should take in response to the espionage case. You should have seen the guidance that the [National Protective Security Authority \(NPSA\)](#) and the [National Cyber Security Centre \(NCSC\)](#) published last year, on what to look out for in terms of malicious foreign targeting and some basic steps you can take to protect yourself. I urge everyone to read through that guidance. Should you experience any suspicious or out of the ordinary interactions – whether in person or online – please report it to the Parliamentary Security Department (PSD). Noble Lords will appreciate the sensitivity of these issues. I would like to re-emphasise that protecting the operational integrity of our police and security services is of the utmost importance and protecting that of a live police investigation.

**The noble Lord, Lord Bellingham** asked whether a report is due to be delivered on the Christopher Cash and Christopher Berry case and lessons learned. The Joint Committee on National Security Strategy (JCNSS) [published a report](#) on espionage cases and the Official Secrets Act 3 December 2025 to which the Government responded 12 February 2026. This followed the submission of both verbal and written evidence to the committee. The full report is available on the committee's website.

**The noble Lord, Lord Carlisle** asked for the Government's commitment to consider your suggestion of creating a Prevent-type training for those who may be at risk of the attention of the Chinese Government to become involved in forms of espionage. PSD has previously run a series of bespoke briefings with high-risk cohorts to draw out the messaging and encourage uptake of support services. They also set up a new reporting channel for people to ask questions and report concerns. I would encourage all to reach out to PSD for advice and guidance. As I noted in my response to Baroness Finn, I would urge all noble Lords to read the [National Protective Security Authority \(NPSA\) and the National Cyber Security Centre \(NCSC\)](#) published last year, on what to look out for in terms of malicious foreign targeting and some basic steps you can take to protect yourself:

**The noble Lord, Lord Evans** asked about the Ministry of Defence (MoD) procurement of British Army uniforms and 'when the contract was signed'. The MoD has no live contracts with companies registered or based in China and as such, MoD spend with China is embedded within the supply chains of our direct contractors. The MoD is committed to providing the best possible clothing and equipment to our Armed Forces, ensuring they are well-equipped to carry out their duties effectively and safely. Through the Logistics, Commodities and Services Transformation (LCST) contract with Leidos Europe Limited (LEL), Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) procures approximately 16,000 different clothing items and a further 1,300 ceremonial accoutrements such as cuirasses and sabres that form a part of ceremonial uniforms. Uniforms are not purchased fully assembled but rather as individual items. Other areas of the MoD also procure clothing for uniforms on a smaller scale. The MoD does not have a contract with China for combat clothing. As the MoD's Prime Contractor, LEL currently has 77 active contracts across 45 Tier 1 suppliers. Of these 45 suppliers, 39 are based in the UK. A contract can cover a single item or more than a hundred different items, and it is common for contractors to subcontract work to one or more suppliers. The MoD welcomes bids from UK-based companies and encourages them to participate in procurement competitions. Tenders for clothing are conducted in line with the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23), which ensures fair competition and does not permit discrimination based on nationality unless a secrecy and security exemption can be justified.

I committed to provide an update to **the noble Lord, Lord Rooker** on Xinjiang province and the wider cotton supply chain. This Government stands firm on human rights, including in Xinjiang, where China continues to persecute and arbitrarily detain Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim minorities. We raise our concerns at the highest levels. The Prime Minister raised human rights with President Xi Jinping when they met in January. Senior Ministers have also raised human rights in meetings with their counterparts. The UK continues to coordinate efforts with our international partners to hold China to account for their human rights violations. We share your concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, including credible reports

of Uyghur forced labour in the cotton industry. Let me assure you that the Government is committed to tackling forced labour in the UK and in global supply chains to ensure UK businesses are not complicit in human rights violations.

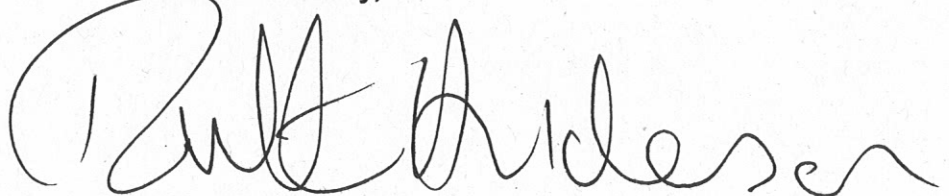
Under Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, commercial businesses who operate in the UK and have a turnover of £36m or more are required to report annually on the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains. On 24 March 2025 the Home Office published new statutory guidance, which provides more practical and comprehensive advice for businesses, so they can go further and faster in their fight against modern slavery. The UK also supports voluntary due diligence approaches by our businesses to protect human rights and the environment across their operations and supply chain relationships, as steered by the UN Guiding Principle on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. The Responsible Business Conduct review is considering the effectiveness of the UK's current regime and alternative measures to support responsible business practices across UK and global supply chains, including human rights and environmental considerations.

**The noble Baroness, Lady May**, I committed to reflecting on your point regarding precise language about the difference between people smuggling and people trafficking. I can confirm that I have raised this with my officials and this will be reflected in my future briefing packs.

As I set out in your Lordship's house, the Government is taking robust action to ensure the UK's democratic institutions and processes are a hard target for this activity. We will continue to engage with China confidently and pragmatically in areas where engagement is in the UK's national interests. However, we will never compromise on our national security. I continue to be grateful for your engagement on this important topic.

I will place a copy of this letter in the House library.

**Yours sincerely,**

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

**Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent  
Parliamentary Secretary in the Cabinet Office and  
Baroness-in-Waiting [Government Whip]**