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From the Chairman



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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You asked for the Committee's advice about taking up a part-time, unpaid appointment as Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Russo-British Chamber of Commerce.

The Committee took into account the role of the Russo-British Chamber of Commerce, which is to promote trade and investment between the United Kingdom and Russia. The Committee noted that you did not have any official dealings with your prospective employer during your last two years in office. Furthermore, you confirmed that you are not aware of any relationship (contractual or otherwise) between your prospective employer and your former Department. The Committee noted that you have not had any dealings with any competitors (although given the unique nature of the Russo-Chamber of Commerce's role, they do not have competitors in the usual sense). The Committee took into account that it is now seven months since you left office and that the appointment is unpaid.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, and bearing in mind your current role as Trade Envoy to Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, our advice is that you can take up the appointment, subject to the following conditions:

- you should not draw on any privileged information available to you from your time in Government or in your current capacity as Trade Envoy;
- you should make it clear in any activities you undertake on behalf of your new employer that you are acting as their representative and not as a Government representative; and

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- you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of your new employer or its clients for two years from your last day in office.

It might be helpful if I add that lobbying is defined in the Business Appointment Rules in the following way: "Lobbying in this context means that the former Minister should not engage in communication with Government - including Ministers, special advisers and officials - with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy in relation to their own interests, or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted".

I should be grateful if you would inform us as soon as you take up the appointment or, if earlier, when it is announced that you will do so, either by returning the enclosed form or by emailing this office at the above address. We shall otherwise not be able to deal with any enquiries, since we do not release information about appointments which have not been taken up or announced. This could lead to a false assumption being made about whether you had complied with the Ministerial Code. Similarly, I should be grateful if you would inform us if you propose to extend or otherwise change your role with Russo-British Chamber of Commerce as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to seek fresh advice.

Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website and include the main details of the application, together with the Advisory Committee's advice, in the regularly updated consolidated list on our website and in the next annual report.

Lord Lang of Monkton

Charles Hendry Esq MP