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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 on a part-time, unpaid role as President of the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS).

The Committee noted that, as Minister of State at the FCO, you had constant dealings on Commonwealth issues albeit this had no direct connection with the workings or organisation of the RCS. The Committee took into account that you are not aware of any relationship between the RCS and your former Department and that you have not had any official dealings with any competitors (albeit the RCS does not have competitors in the usual sense).

Our advice is that, on the understanding that you would not draw on any privileged information from your time in Government (including in your earlier capacity as personal adviser to the Foreign Secretary on energy and resource security), we see no reason why you should not undertake this role subject to the condition that, for two years from the date of your leaving office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of your new employer or its clients.

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 civil servant 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

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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 the RCS 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

The Right Honourable Lord Howell of Guildford