

From the Chair



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

G/8 Ground Floor, 1 Horse Guards Road SW1A 2HQ

Telephone: 020 7271 0839

Email: acoba@acoba.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.gov.uk/acoba>

December 2016

You asked for the Committee's advice about taking up a paid, part-time appointment as an Advisor to Brand Communications Group (BCG), a company which focuses on building and promoting African brands.

Your role will be to advise the directors at BCG on doing business in Africa, as well as speaking at conferences.

When considering this application the Committee noted that during your time as Minister you had no contact with BCG, or any of its competitors. The Committee also took into account that your former department, the FCO, have no concerns about this appointment.

Taking into account the specific facts in this case in accordance with the Government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises the appointment be subject to the following conditions:

- you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the organisations or persons to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you as a Minister; and
- for two years from your last day in ministerial office you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Brand Communications Group, its partners or clients or make use, directly or indirectly, of your contacts in Government and/or Crown service to influence policy or secure business on behalf of Brand Communications Group and its clients.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act or otherwise.

From the Chair

It might be helpful if I add that the Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that former Ministers "should not engage in communication with Government – including Ministers, special advisers and officials – with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy [including applications for awards or grants] 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 it is announced that you will do so, either by returning the enclosed form or by emailing the 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 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.

The Baroness Browning

James Duddridge MP