



**SECRETARY OF STATE
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL
LONDON
SW1A 2HB**

Telephone 020 7218 9000
Fax: 020 721 87140

30 August 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

Last month marked my fourth year as Secretary of State for Defence. It also marks the ninth year as a Minister. I have had the privilege of serving you and your predecessors in the task of protecting this great country and keeping its citizens safe. As you know that responsibility carries with it a 24/7 duty to be available at almost no notice. In my time as both Security Minister and at Defence, I have been able to contribute to the Government's response to a range of threats and incidents.

From Wannacry, the 2017 terrorist attacks, the Salisbury Poisonings, Afghanistan, Sudan and Ukraine, it has been an honour to serve alongside the men and women of our Armed forces and intelligence services who sacrifice so much for our security.

The last four years has seen our Armed Forces and their leadership shine through. Whether it was the evacuation of Kabul, our Covid response, Ukraine or Sudan, the professionalism of our people has been first class.

The investment you made in Defence as Chancellor and the continued support you have shown as Prime Minister has been key to enabling the Ministry of Defence to deliver for Britain. I am personally very grateful for your leadership.

As I finish my tenure, I can reflect that the Ministry of Defence that I leave is now more modern, better funded and more confident than the organisation I took over in 2019. As well as being active around the world we have also invested in prosperity at home. I am proud that I have secured GCAP, AUKUS, NCF, National shipbuilding and the Defence and Security industrial strategies that will secure thousands of British jobs for our young people many years into the future.

The Ministry of Defence is back on the path to being once again world class with world class people. The United Kingdom is respected around the world

**Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA**

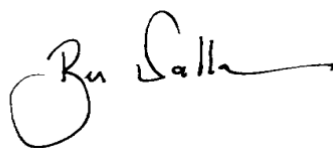
for our Armed Forces and that respect has only grown more since the war in Ukraine. I know you agree with me that we must not return to the days where Defence was viewed as a discretionary spend by Government and savings were achieved by hollowing out.

I genuinely believe that over the next decade the world will get more insecure and more unstable. We both share the belief that now is the time to invest. Ever since I joined the Army I have dedicated myself to serving my country. That dedication however comes at a personal toll to me and my family.

After much reflection, I have taken the decision to ask that I be allowed to step down. I won my seat in 2005 and after so many years it is time for me to invest in the parts of life that I have neglected, and to explore new opportunities.

Thank you for the support and your friendship. You and the Government will have my continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Wallace', with a large circular flourish on the left side.

THE RT HON BEN WALLACE MP

**Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA**