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MG11C

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

URN

Statement of: Matthew Collins CBE

Age if under 18: Over 18

(if over 18 insert 'over 18')

Occupation: Deputy National Security Adviser

This statement (consisting of 5 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Witness Signature:

Date: 21/02/24

Introduction

1. I have been asked to amplify a number of the points which were made in my first statement.

Professional background

2. I am the Deputy National Security Adviser for Intelligence, Defence and Security in the Cabinet Office. I am one of three Deputy National Security Advisers. In my role, I advise the Prime Minister on a broad range of threats, including from states, terrorists and organised crime groups. This covers physical threats to people or places, cyber threats to information technology systems and threats to our economy.
3. Both this statement and my first statement are based on my personal knowledge of the matters to which I refer. There are limits to what I am able to say in a public forum owing to the need to protect sensitive information and, ultimately, the UK's national security. I have, nevertheless, sought to provide as much detail as I am able.

The security of the UK

4. China is an authoritarian state, with different values to the UK. This presents challenges for both the UK and our allies. China and the UK both benefit from bilateral trade and investment, but China also presents the biggest state-based threat to the UK's economic security.

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5. This manifests itself in a number of ways. For example, a wide range of UK government and commercial targets were attacked by three 'Advanced Persistent Threat' groups which the UK Government attributed to China's Ministry of State Security. An advanced persistent threat (APT) uses continuous, clandestine, and sophisticated hacking techniques to gain access to a system and remain inside for a prolonged period of time, with potentially destructive consequences. In July 2021, the Government attributed the hack of Microsoft Exchange servers to the Chinese state linked actors and judged that the purpose of the attack was highly likely to enable large-scale espionage, including acquiring personally identifiable information and intellectual property.
6. It is important for me to emphasise, however, that the Government is committed to pursuing a positive economic relationship with China. The Government believes that the UK must continue to engage with international partners on trade and investment to grow our economy, while ensuring that our security and values are not compromised.

The "senior CCP leader"

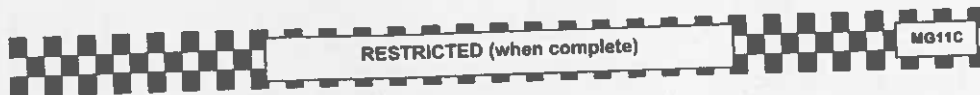
7. In my first statement, I referred to "a senior CCP leader". I have been asked to provide more information about that individual's role and remit. Official biographies show that in 2014 he was appointed Deputy Director of the Office of the CPC Central National Security Commission ('NSC'). The creation of the NSC was announced in 2014, with President Xi as its Chairman.
8. From 2014 – 2016, the senior CCP leader served as Deputy Director of the Office of the NSC. The Office of the NSC is the headquarters of the NSC and it oversees and coordinates the NSC's functioning and work.
9. In May 2017, the senior CCP leader was made Party Secretary of the Beijing Municipality. From 2017 – 2022, he served as Beijing Party Secretary and in October 2022 he was elevated to the Politburo Standing Committee. In May 2023, he was named in media reports as one of the NSC's three Vice Chairmen (with President Xi as the Chairman).

The position between 28 December 2021 and 3 February 2023

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10. I confirm that the content of my original statement reflects my view of the position between 28 December 2021 and 3 February 2023.

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