



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Minister for Europe and the
Americas
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

09 January 2019

Sir William Cash MP
Chair
European Scrutiny Committee
House of Commons
14 Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NB

Dear Bill,

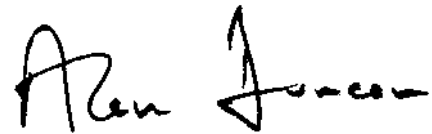
Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/2078 of 21 December 2018 amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine

I am writing with regard to the attached EU Council Decision, and Council Regulation concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine. This Decision renews the sectoral “Tier III” sanctions against Russian entities, including an arms embargo, ban on the supply of equipment and services to Russian deep water, Arctic and shale oil exploration and production projects, and a ban on Russian access to certain EU financial instruments and services.

Following the conclusions of the March 2015 European Council, the duration of the Tier III sanctions was explicitly linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. There has since been little progress on Minsk made by Russia. Due to the importance of the Russia Tier III regime (“Sectoral Measures”), the political decision to rollover the Russia Tier III Sanctions regime was taken at the December European Council; 13 December 2018. Rolling over these sanctions immediately after the December European Council is essential to keeping the pressure on Russia and unfortunately meant that, due to such tight time constraint, I have had to override Parliamentary Scrutiny. The EU formally adopted these measures on the 21 December 2018.

As you know, the responsibility to ensure your Committee can scrutinise sanctions decisions is something I take seriously but the need for the override of scrutiny on this occasion was regrettably unavoidable.

I am writing in similar terms to The Lord Boswell of Aynho, Chair of the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Union, and copying this letter to the Clerks of both Committees, Les Saunders at the Department for Exiting the European Union, Adam Nutley, FCO Scrutiny Coordinator, Nicole Mason, FCO Parliamentary Adviser, and Lynne Smith, FCO Select Committee Liaison Officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Duncan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

THE RT HON SIR ALAN DUNCAN MP