



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

13 March 2019

The Lord Boswell of Aynho
Chair
Select Committee on European Union
Committee Office
House of Lords
Millbank House
London
SW1A 0PW

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

Dear Tim,

Council Implementing Decision and Council Implementing Regulation concerning restrictive measures against Syria

I am writing with regard to the attached EU Implementing Council Decision and Council Implementing Regulation concerning restrictive measures against Syria.

The Council Decision and Council Implementing Regulation add seven new listings to the EU Syria sanctions regime and update the statements of reasons for eight individuals. Those individuals now listed will be subject to an asset freeze and a travel ban.

The documents were adopted at the Foreign Affairs Council on 4 March. Unfortunately, due to the risk of asset flight, I found myself in the position of having to agree to the adoption of these measures without being able to follow the normal parliamentary scrutiny process. As you know, the responsibility to keep your Committee informed on issues concerning sanctions is something I take seriously and the need for the override of scrutiny on this occasion was regrettably unavoidable.

Those listed under the Council Implementing Decision and Council Implementing Regulation were appointed to Ministerial positions by President Asad in November 2018. There is designation criteria under the EU Syria sanctions regime for imposing asset freezes and travel bans on individuals who have held office since May 2011 as Ministers within the Syrian Government. It is Government policy that Ministers within the Syrian Government should be considered jointly responsible for the policy of repression carried out by the Syrian regime.

I am writing in similar terms to Sir William Cash MP, Chair of the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee, 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.

Alan Duncan

RT HON SIR ALAN DUNCAN MP