

7 March 2011

Chris Bryant MP  
Chairman of the APPG Group on Russia  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Minister for Europe

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your letter of 26 January 2011 to the Home Secretary, raising the case of Sergei Magnitsky and asking her for a meeting to discuss this case further. As I am the Minister who is leading the Government's response to this case, she has asked me to reply on her behalf.

As you know, the Government has repeatedly emphasised to the Russian Government our concern about the implications of the Magnitsky case for the rule of law and respect for human rights in Russia. Both the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister discussed the case with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, when he visited London on 15 February. We were disappointed by the announcement on 10 February that the conclusion of the official Russian investigation into Mr. Magnitsky's death has again been delayed.

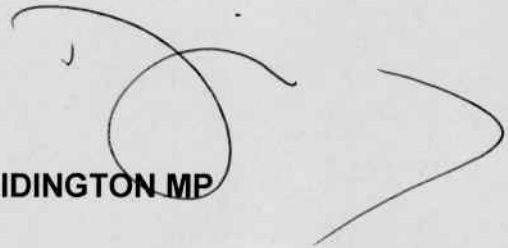
We are aware that the US Congress is currently considering legislation which would impose a visa ban on certain officials allegedly involved in Mr. Magnitsky's death. Similarly, we took note of the European Parliament's recommendation that EU Member States should themselves consider introducing a visa ban for these officials.

You also ask whether the Home Secretary will consider adding the individuals allegedly involved in Mr Magnitsky's death to the list of proscribed organisations and deny them entry to the UK. The Home Secretary can add an organisation to the list of proscribed organisations at Schedule 2 to the Terrorism Act 2000 if she believes it to be "concerned in terrorism" as defined by that Act. This power can only be used in respect of organisations – individuals cannot be added to the list.

The Home Secretary also has the power to exclude an individual from coming to the UK where she considers that the individual's presence here would not be conducive to the public good. In addition it is open to an Immigration Officer to assess whether a visa national, as in the case of a Russian national, should be granted entry to the UK.

I am sure, however, that you will appreciate that a duty of confidentiality would mean that the Government ~~is~~ unable to discuss the details of individual immigration cases with anyone other than the subject or his/her nominated representative.

*Yours,*

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large loop and a long horizontal stroke.

THE RT HON DAVID LIDINGTON MP