

22 June 2020

The Rt Hon, the Baroness Anelay of St Johns DBE
Chair, International Relations & Defence Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

King Charles Street
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Secretary of State

Dear Joyce,

I am writing to update you on the Government's progress in tabling legislation to bring a global human rights ('Magnitsky-style') sanctions regime into force.

Like many Members on all sides of the House, I have for many years been a strong advocate of the UK implementing a global human rights ('Magnitsky-style') sanctions regime. As Foreign Secretary, I have made this a top priority. As you will be aware, the Sanctions Act requires the implementation of secondary legislation in order to bring sanctions regimes into force. I am delighted to say that the work is nearing completion, and we shall be tabling regulations to bring a global human rights sanctions regime into force in the coming weeks, in advance of Summer Recess.

This is a major step forward: I believe that introducing our own global human rights sanctions regime will give the UK an additional, powerful tool that we can use to tackle human rights violations and abuses, and underpin the UK's role as a force for good in global affairs. It will be the UK's first independent sanctions regime under the Sanctions Act. In developing the legislation, we have proceeded with the care and caution appropriate to the complex and novel nature of the work.

This sanctions regime will not be about punishing countries or peoples, but will be a smart tool allowing the Government to impose both asset freezes and travel bans on specific individuals or entities in order to provide accountability for and deter serious violations or abuses of human rights around the world. It will include measures to be able to target both those directly involved in abuse, and those who financially profit from such abuses. It will have scope to target both legal (e.g. corporations) and natural persons.

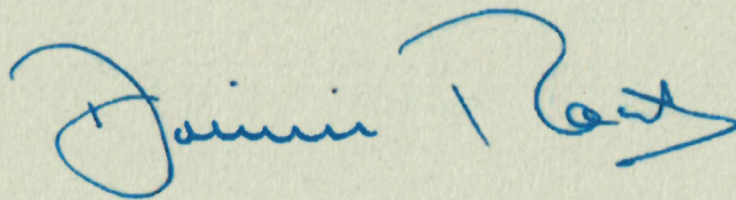
As the International Relations & Defence Committee has recognised, sanctions are most effective when implemented collectively. This has been at the forefront of our consideration during the development of the regulations and we have been keen to learn from the experience of others. Once our sanctions regime is launched, we will seek close collaboration with those who implement similar style sanctions, including the US and Canada. We also remain supportive of the European Union's efforts to establish a human rights sanctions regime, and are following developments in

Australia with keen interest. I am committed to making the UK a world leader on global human rights ('Magnitsky-style') sanctions.

In addition to international coordination, domestic human rights NGOs will rightly feel they have a strong stake in this legislation and we value the knowledge that NGOs and other organisations hold on human rights. I also recognise, as the US and Canada have also done, that we can benefit from civil society's insights into human rights issues at the local and country level. I am committed to ensuring that we maintain our ongoing productive dialogue with civil society on this issue.

As someone who has, as a back-bencher, championed UK Magnitsky powers, I recognise the range of views expressed by Parliamentarians on the best approach to their implementation. Whilst I believe the regulations we are tabling will be a huge step forward for the UK's role as a promoter of human rights around the world, I recognise we must continue to explore future use and implementation of our autonomous sanctions powers. There are a number of issues that need to be worked through to ensure that any sanctions regimes we introduce are both effective and sustainable. Sanctions are powerful tools, capable of having an enormous impact on individuals, commercial activity and even entire countries. It is important to take the time to get them right. I am committed to making every effort to achieve this.

Finally, I would like to again pay tribute to the role that Parliament and many individual Members have played in recent years to advocate, at times with great passion, for UK human rights sanctions legislation. This advocacy will not, of course, end once the legislation is on the statute book. Parliamentarians will wish to continue to engage Government, including to provide proposals for designations. I stand ready to work constructively with Parliamentarians on all sides of the house to ensure that we are making best use of the Global Human Rights sanctions regime to reinforce the UK's role as a force for good and a doughty defender of the rules-based international system.



THE RT HON DOMINIC RAAB MP