



Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwateng MP
Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
SW1H 0ET

29th July 2022

Dear Secretary of State --

OneWeb – Eutelsat

Thank you for your letter dated 29th July in respect of the proposed merger of OneWeb and Eutelsat.

It was always clear that OneWeb would require significant capital to be successful. This is exactly why my Committee expressed concern at the way in which OneWeb was initially purchased by government and why the then Permanent Secretary requested a Ministerial Direction, due to her inability to sign off the value of money requirements. I am therefore not surprised that such a merger is being proposed.

You note in your letter that the proposed merger will be subject to clearance under the National Security and Investment Act. You are clearly conflicted in this process as both the decision maker under the National Security and Investment Act and the government lead for our shareholding in OneWeb. I'd therefore be grateful if you could set out how you intend to manage this conflict of interest and confirm that my national security and investment sub-committee will be granted enhanced scrutiny of the deal.

Lastly, concerns have been raised with me about the minority shareholding of Eutelsat by the Chinese government and the fact that Eutelsat has been broadcasting Russian television content, allegedly including propaganda about the Russian war in Ukraine. I'd be grateful if you could address these issues in your response to this letter or as part of our scrutiny of the deal through the national security and investment sub-committee.

I'm copying this letter to the Chairs of the Science & Technology, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Intelligence & Security Committees for their information.

I should be grateful for a response to this letter by 12th August.

Yours sincerely,

DARREN JONES MP
Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

