



Foreign Affairs Committee

From the Chair
Alicia Kearns MP

Rt Hon James Cleverly MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

31 October 2022

Dear Foreign Secretary,

I am writing on behalf of the Committee to raise issues regarding the 16 October Manchester Chinese Consulate incident and the Government's approach to China.

As you are aware, on the 16 October there were attacks on protesters outside and inside the grounds of the Chinese Consulate in Manchester. On 18 October the Minister for the Americas and the Overseas Territories responded to an Urgent Question on the incident by saying that there had been "an informal exchange of concern between the two sides" and that the Chinese chargé d'affaires was due to meet with officials that day, as the Chinese Ambassador was then out of the country. The Minister also said that it was up to the police and the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether a prosecution should be brought. Videos of the scene clearly show Chinese consulate staff, led by the consul-general himself, tearing down posters and attacking the demonstration. As these individuals are diplomats, prosecution can only occur if the Chinese authorities were to waive diplomatic immunity for these individuals. This is highly unlikely given the attitudes expressed in public statements by the consul-general. It is totally unacceptable that such an attack on a peaceful demonstration should take place in the UK and that the perpetrators not be held to account. We therefore ask:

- Will you now call the Chinese Ambassador to your office to explain the actions of his diplomatic staff?
- Will all those Chinese diplomats identified as participating in the violent attack on 18 October be declared persona non grata and told to leave the country forthwith, as is the right of the United Kingdom as a receiving State under Article 9 of the Vienna Convention? If not, why not?
- Will you make a Ministerial Statement updating the House on the meeting with the Chinese chargé d'affaires, progress regarding the prosecution or expulsion of the individuals concerned and the steps the Government have taken and will take to protect peaceful protests?
- What is the legal basis, if any, on which Chinese "police stations" are currently operating in Hendon, Croydon and Glasgow?
- Has the FCDO yet established the depth of the involvement of Chinese government officials at these sites?
- What action will the Government take to address concerns about intimidation emanating from these "police stations"?

We understand that considerable efforts have been put into the interdepartmental process of formulating a strategy for dealing with challenges posed by the Chinese Communist Party to the UK. We also appreciate that the Government does not publish entire strategy documents relating

to potential adversaries for understandable security reasons. However, it is important for the public, businesses and policymakers to know the general approach to China adopted by Government, together with the principles upon which it is based, so that they can comply with and support it. In this regard:

- What is the new Government's policy towards China?
- Will the Government undertake to publish a document outlining its approach to China?
How soon will such a document be published?

It would be helpful to receive an answer to this letter by 10 November and I intend to place our correspondence in the public domain.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alicia Kearns', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ALICIA KEARNS