



Department for International Trade

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Dear Darren,

Thank you for your letter of 16 December relating to the evidence session taken by the Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Sub-Committee on National Security and Investment. I welcome your enquiry into my department's actions to secure critical minerals supply chains and agree on the importance of international collaboration in the support of the UK's first Critical Minerals Strategy published in July 2022.

The UK Government has been at the forefront of international activity to improve the resilience of critical supply chains through free and fair trade. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, my department took a globally leading position on supply chain resilience, using analysis and data to deepen understanding of the critical sectors. As you refer to in your letter, the security of supply of critical minerals is crucial for UK national security, economic prosperity and energy transition. As a result, my department has been working closely with BEIS on delivering the ambitions set out in the Critical Minerals Strategy to ensure the security of supply for UK supply chains, whilst also incorporating environmental and social considerations.

There is significant power in international partnerships, and they are crucial to the UK's interests in supply chain resilience, not least in supporting the rules-based multilateral trading systems on which our economic growth relies. My department has been heavily involved in multilateral discussions and in building bilateral relationships to strengthen critical minerals supply chains, encourage free and fair trade, avoid protectionism, and promote diversification to bolster global resilience and our ability to deal with future shocks.

Leaders at the UK's G7 Presidency agreed to consider mechanisms and share best practices to address risks to the resilience of the critical global supply chains, in areas such as critical minerals. This focus followed through into the Germany G7 presidency and we are working closely with G7 counterparts to further collaborate on these issues. The UK has also been an active voice in wider initiatives such as the US-driven Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), set up to ensure that critical minerals are produced, processed, and recycled in a manner that supports the ability of countries to realise the full economic development benefit of their geological endowments; the International Energy Agency which, together with Australia, Canada, EU, Japan, Republic of Korea and US, will work on security of supply, market transparency, and sustainable and responsible supply; and the G20.

Bilaterally, we have been collaborating with international partners, including Australia and Canada, to ensure resilient global critical minerals supply chains that adhere to the highest environmental, social, and governance standards. This work includes establishing a Critical Minerals Supply Chains Dialogue with Australia, which is facilitating international private sector opportunities through partnerships with mining businesses. We have also committed to strengthen our strategic cooperation on economic resilience, including critical minerals and supply chains with Canada.

The UK has world leading expertise that supports the extraction of critical minerals in a sustainable and environmental way and provides resilient infrastructure solutions to enable the movement of the supplies of the minerals to the industries that need them. My department is helping open up export opportunities for this capability through dialogue with the countries with critical minerals, bringing in UK expertise and knowhow to support the securing of critical supply.

We will continue to shore up future critical minerals supply by maximising the UK's engagement with priority countries where we have significant dependencies; strengthening and broadening engagement with the countries important to our Net Zero and technology ambitions; and continuing to help exporters in these sectors, to support the UK's long term economic prosperity and HMG efforts to strengthen our resilience, economic security, and stability in an ever-changing landscape.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kemi Badenoch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

THE RT HON KEMI BADENOCH MP

Secretary of State for International Trade & President of the Board of Trade and
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