

31st March 2021

Tom Tugendhat MP,
Foreign Affairs Committee,
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.
Letter by email: FAC@parliament.uk

Dear Mr Tugendhat,

Thank you for your letter and questions about Imperial's relationship with CALT.

Imperial had an academic research collaboration with CALT, but is no longer working with them. The agreement ran from 2016 to 2019, when we ended the relationship. None of the research undertaken was subject to restrictions on what could be made public. Indeed the partnership was designed to lead to openly published academic work.

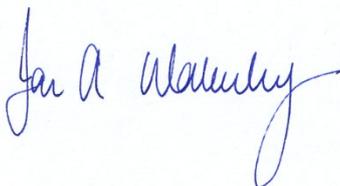
The collaboration was subject to Imperial's Relationship Review Policy, as well as further scrutiny following consultation with the Export Control Joint Unit. When due diligence was first carried out in 2014 and 2015, prior to the start of the agreement, no association was drawn between CALT and Xinjiang. Subsequent consultation with the ECJU, alongside discussions with our academic partner, the University of Exeter, identified issues that led to Imperial terminating the relationship.

This year Imperial has further strengthened its relationship review measures with the formation of a new Scrutiny Committee to assist further and wider consideration of certain relationships in light of emerging information and national security related matters.

Imperial continually engages with its own community on these issues, as well as relevant partners, such as the Russell Group and Universities UK. We also work closely with relevant government departments to take account of national security and other concerns. All our partnerships are undertaken with great care.

Imperial is a global institution and we take our responsibilities to the UK seriously. We will continue to engage and collaborate worldwide as we seek to conduct the highest quality, most impactful research for the benefit of society.

Yours Sincerely,



Professor Ian Walmsley FRS
Provost
Chair in Experimental Physics
Imperial College London



Foreign Affairs Committee

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From the Chair
Tom Tugendhat MP

Professor Ian Walmsley FRS
Imperial College London
Provost
Letter by email: provost@imperial.ac.uk

24 March 2021

Dear Professor Walmsley,

I am writing regarding Imperial's partnership with the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT) for its UK-China Advanced Structure Manufacturing Technology Laboratory.

According to credible reports from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, CALT's parent company, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), is considered very high risk for its research, development and production of military technologies for the People's Liberation Army of China. Furthermore, reports indicate that drones developed by CASC were deployed in the autonomous region of Xinjiang following unrest in 2014. As you will be aware, Xinjiang is the location of the identity-based persecution of more than one million people, predominantly Uyghur Muslims.

As part of our inquiry into the Xinjiang detention camps, the Foreign Affairs Committee is attempting to determine the extent of British involvement with organisations who may be implicated in the persecution of Uyghurs and other ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang. In this context, we would be grateful for responses to the following questions:

- What is the nature of Imperial College London's agreement with CALT? Is the University expected to share research findings and developments that would not otherwise be made public in exchange for funding?
- Have any members of staff or students at the University raised concerns about the partnership?
- Were you aware of the extent of the atrocities being committed in Xinjiang – and CALT's reported involvement with them – when this collaboration was agreed?
- Prior to its agreement, was this collaboration subjected to scrutiny by an academic ethics board or other oversight body?

It would be helpful to have a response to this letter by 7 April. I intend to place your response in the public domain.

Best wishes,

TOM TUGENDHAT