



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Mr Tom Tugendhat MBE MP
Chair
Foreign Affairs Select Committee
House of Commons

21 April 2020

Dear Mr Tugendhat,

EU VENTILATOR PROCUREMENT SCHEME

Thank you for inviting me to appear in front of the FAC today. It was a pleasure to speak to you all. I wanted to clarify a point I made regarding the Committee's question about the EU's Ventilator procurement scheme - the Joint Procurement Agreement.

Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding, I inadvertently and wrongly told the Committee, that Ministers were briefed by UKMIS on the EU's Joint Procurement Agreement scheme and took a political decision not to participate in it. This is incorrect. Ministers were not briefed by our mission in Brussels about the scheme and a political decision was not taken on whether or not to participate.

The facts of the situation are as previously set out. Owing to an initial communication problem, the UK did not receive an invitation in time to join in four joint COVID EU procurement schemes. As those four initial schemes had already gone out to tender we were unable to take part.

The Health Secretary has set out the Government's position on this going forward.

I should be grateful if you would share this clarification with the Committee.

Simon McDonald

Sir Simon McDonald KCMG KCVO
Permanent Under-Secretary of State
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

Tel: 020 7008 2150
Email: pus.action@fco.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/fco