



House of Commons
Foreign Affairs Committee

The Work of the Committee in 2005 and 2006

First Report of Session 2006–07



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Report, together with formal minutes

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Foreign Affairs Committee

The Foreign Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the administration, expenditure and policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and its associated agencies.

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Rt Hon Mr David Heathcoat-Amory (*Conservative, Wells*)
Mr John Horam (*Conservative, Orpington*)
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The committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/foreign_affairs_committee.cfm.

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1 Introduction

1. The Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) is one of the departmentally-related select committees of the House of Commons, which scrutinise the expenditure, administration and policy of government departments. In the case of the FAC, this scrutiny is exercised over the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the agencies for which the FCO's Ministers are accountable to Parliament: the British Council; BBC World Service; and the Wilton Park conference centre. The Committee has 14 Members, and since July 2005 its Chairman has been Mike Gapes MP.

2. The Committee usually produces a Report on its activities in respect of each calendar year. However, the year 2005 saw a general election. The dissolution of Parliament in April 2005 meant the dissolution also of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the 2001–05 Parliament. The Committee was reconstituted in July 2005 and commenced work in October. In common with other select committees, we did not publish an annual Report for 2005. This Report therefore covers the entire period July 2005 to December 2006. The work of our predecessor Committee from January to April 2005 is also summarised, in a separate chapter.¹

3. In the calendar year 2005, the old Committee met formally on nine occasions and the new Committee on eleven. The old Committee visited six countries and held fifteen informal meetings with visitors to the United Kingdom in 2005; the new Committee made visits to four countries overseas and held 36 informal meetings.

4. In 2006, we held 30 formal meetings and 54 informal meetings, and we visited 15 countries. The increase in the number of countries visited has been possible because of the increase in membership of the Committee, from 11 to 14 Members. This has made it easier for us to split into two groups for visits and thereby to cover more ground, to meet more interlocutors and to gather more information to use in our Reports. The Annexes to this Report give more detail on our visits and meetings.

5. Reports of the Committee were listed on the House's Order Paper as relevant to proceedings on three occasions in the 2005–06 parliamentary session. In December 2005, our Report on Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism was debated at a sitting of the House in Westminster Hall,² as were our Report on the FCO's human rights report for 2005 (in June 2006) and the Quadripartite Committee's Report on strategic arms export controls (in March 2006).³ Members and Ministers have also referred to the Committee's work during debates in the House.

6. In this Report we adhere to the practice adopted by the Committee in previous years, of presenting its work under the following headings:

- Continuing scrutiny of foreign policy;

1 See paras 60 to 70 below

2 HC Deb, 8 December 2005, cols 323–362WH

3 HC Deb, 15 June 2006, cols 315–362WH; HC Deb, 16 March 2006, cols 493–526WH

- Scrutiny of specific foreign policy issues;
- Scrutiny of Foreign and Commonwealth Office publications;
- Pre-legislative foreign policy scrutiny; and
- Other scrutiny activities.

We relate our work to the wider parliamentary process of scrutiny of the policies and actions of the executive; we comment on the responses of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to our Reports, and on its wider relationship with the Committee; and we preview our future programme. We also seek to demonstrate how the Committee's work relates to the 'core tasks' identified by the House's Liaison Committee.⁴

4 See Annex 1

2 Continuing scrutiny of foreign policy

7. The Committee has maintained its in-depth scrutiny of foreign policy aspects of the ‘war against terrorism’. However, in its most recent Report under this title, it concluded that the phrase ‘war against terrorism’ was inappropriate. Work on the continuing threats to global security, on the United Kingdom’s foreign policy response to those threats, and on the United Kingdom’s strategic international priorities, as set out in the FCO’s *Active Diplomacy* White Paper of March 2006, has been transferred to a new inquiry, ‘Global Security.’ This inquiry will be pursued through a series of focused exercises, starting in March 2007 with evidence on the Middle East.

8. In addition to this continuing work on global terror, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East, we have sought to ensure that other consistently important areas of policy receive adequate scrutiny. We have therefore continued to hear evidence on developments in the European Union, producing a Report in Spring 2006; and we have participated fully, as in previous years, in the work of the Quadripartite Committee on Strategic Arms Export Controls. We deal in more detail with each of these aspects of our work in the following paragraphs.

Fourth Report of Session 2005–06, Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism (HC 573)

9. In our final Report to bear the title *Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism*, we followed up a number of specific areas of policy covered in one or more of our previous Reports in this series, such as the political and security situations in Iraq and Afghanistan; the Middle East peace process; and counter-proliferation measures. We also took an in-depth look at the roles of Saudi Arabia and of the United Arab Emirates in countering terrorism (as the Report notes, 15 of the 19 terrorists directly involved in the events of 11 September 2001 were Saudi citizens and two were UAE nationals). The breadth of coverage represented by the series of seven Reports, which we are continuing in 2007 under the ‘Global Security’ heading, has we believe made an important contribution to Parliament’s understanding of the complex matrix of issues which continue to dominate the United Kingdom’s foreign policy agenda.

10. In January 2006, six members of the Committee visited Baghdad and Basrah. In the capital, they held meetings with Iraqi political leaders as well as with the British and American ambassadors, and visited the Iraqi Army’s military academy at al-Rustamiyah. In Basrah, the group held talks with political and religious leaders, as well as meeting the local police chief and being briefed by British personnel. The visit was of great value in giving us first-hand information on political and other developments in Iraq. It was also an opportunity to witness the dedication and hard work of FCO, military and other personnel in what remains one of the most dangerous postings of all.

11. We have also met visiting members of the Iraqi administration when they have been passing through London, including President Talabani, Prime Minister Maliki and Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih. Among our other visitors have been members of our

counterpart committee from the Iranian *majlis* and senior Israeli, Syrian and Afghan figures.⁵ We also hosted an address to Members of both Houses by His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan in November 2006. Such informal meetings allowed us to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern with a frankness that would not be appropriate or even possible in a public forum. The exchanges provide important background material, which we use to inform our analysis of the evidence we receive on the record.

12. The Committee's visits to the Middle East and to the Arabian peninsula in November 2005 provided us with important opportunities to ask questions of political leaders and others who are closest to developments in the region, and to see how changes on the ground affect both the Middle East peace process and the 'war on terror'. For example, three of us were able to visit Gaza. After waiting for three hours to cross into Gaza, the group met local politicians, toured the Palestinian side of the freight crossing at Karni, and visited the EU-supervised crossing point with Egypt at Rafah. The group as a whole travelled to the West Bank, meeting Palestinian leaders and visiting an Israeli settlement at Shiloh, where we were able to gain the settlers' perspective on the peace process. Some of us also met Palestinian farmers whose livelihoods had been disrupted by the erection of the separation barrier. This type of direct experience is a vital supplement to our evidence hearings in Westminster.

13. The Report was debated in Westminster Hall on 8 December 2005.⁶ We also pursued numerous points in correspondence with the FCO at ministerial and official level, as part of our structured programme of following up the Government's responses to our conclusions and recommendations. We regard it as important that the Government's response to our Reports should not be the final word on an issue, especially in cases where that response may be in some respect inadequate.

Sixth Report of Session 2005–06, Developments in the European Union (HC 768)

14. It has long been our practice to hear evidence from the Foreign Secretary prior to the biannual meetings of the full European Council. We always place that evidence on the record, regarding it as a highly useful exercise in accountability in itself, but from time to time we also issue a Report.

15. Our decision to prepare a Report on developments in the EU in 2006 rested on a number of factors. These included the opportunity to conduct a retrospective study of the United Kingdom's presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2005; the 'own resources' settlement agreed at the end of that presidency; and the rejection by the electorates of France and the Netherlands of the Treaty Establishing a European Constitution. Our Report dealt with all these issues and with others, such as enlargement. We pursued our conclusions and the Government's response to them when the Foreign Secretary gave oral evidence in December.

5 For the full list, see Annex 3

6 HC Deb, 20 May 2004, cols 311–354WH

16. We have also continued our practice of visiting the country which holds the presidency of the EU. In 2006, we therefore visited both Vienna and Helsinki. During the United Kingdom's presidency in 2005, we were pleased to co-host with the House of Lords European Union Committee a meeting of the chairmen of the foreign affairs committees of all the EU member and applicant states. The meeting, held on the parliamentary estate, was an excellent opportunity to exchange views with our counterparts and we are grateful to the then Minister for Europe, Douglas Alexander MP, and to External Affairs Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, for addressing the gathering.

17. As mentioned earlier in this Report, one consequence of the increase in membership of the Committee from 11 to 14 has been the ability to cover more ground in our overseas visits, by splitting into two or more groups. Thus, while some of us visited the presidency capitals, others were able to visit states which have recently acceded (such as the Czech Republic and Poland) or will shortly accede (Bulgaria and Romania). These visits have given us a valuable, broad perspective on EU affairs. We are continuing this work in January 2007, when one group will visit Brussels and Berlin, while another travels to Turkey and then to Cyprus, to discuss progress towards Turkish accession to the EU.

Fifth Report of Session 2005–06, Strategic Export Controls (HC 873)

18. The Committee has continued to play a full part, together with colleagues from the Defence, International Development and Trade and Industry Committees, in the work of the 'Quadripartite' Committee on strategic arms export controls. Just before the last election, the Committee published a report on the Government's Strategic Export Controls Annual Report for 2003 and in August 2006 it reported on the Government's Strategic Export Controls Annual Report for 2004 and Quarterly Reports for 2005. In 2006 the Committee took evidence for the first time from HM Revenue and Customs and Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office on the enforcement of exports controls.

19. In their latest Report, the four Committees considered a range of issues, including the future of the arms embargo on China, the stalled revisions to the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and the need to tightening controls on those trafficking and brokering arms. The Committee concluded that the UK Government's Presidencies of the EU and the G8 had produced solid progress on strategic export controls and supported the Government's drive for an international Arms Trade Treaty.

3 Scrutiny of specific foreign policy issues

20. As this Report demonstrates, our work on the ‘war on terror’, the Middle East peace process, Iran and the other ‘front page’ foreign policy issues has continued to be at the top of our agenda since the last general election. However, just as before that election our predecessor Committee produced Reports on the Western Balkans and on Cyprus, so we have endeavoured to ensure that emerging foreign policy issues have not been neglected. In the course of 2006, we have completed a major inquiry into East Asia and have started another, into South Asia.

Seventh Report of Session 2005–06, East Asia (HC 860)

21. As we noted in our introduction to this Report,

East Asia is a dynamic region, with half of the world’s population, the world’s fastest-growing economies and a wide spectrum of diverse cultures and political systems. The region has huge economic potential, but also has hundreds of millions of the world’s poorest people. The region also contains a number of significant security risks and unresolved disputes.⁷

The Report followed up the work of our predecessors, who produced a substantial Report on China in November 2000. The focus of our work was once again on China, the dominant power in the region and a country of increasing political, economic and strategic importance. In May 2006, we visited Beijing, Shanghai, the Tibet ‘autonomous region’, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

22. The Chinese authorities expressed strong displeasure at our decision to visit Taiwan and exerted pressure on us to cancel that leg of the visit. We decided to continue with our itinerary, believing it was important to hear all shades of opinion on the Taiwan issue. We also raised our strong concerns about human rights in China, and especially in Tibet, with representatives of the Chinese government. Our hosts’ reactions to our insistence on visiting Taiwan and on discussing human rights confirmed for us the worth of undertaking the visit and of engaging with the Chinese on the basis of democratic values.

23. The Government welcomed our Report, which reflected the FCO’s own shift in the emphasis of its work from the ‘old’ economies of America and Europe to the fast-developing powers of the Asian region.

Evidence on South Asia (HC, 2006–07, 55)

24. The evidence-gathering phase of our inquiry into South Asia began in November 2006 and continues to January 2007. The main focus of the inquiry is on India, as the emerging political and economic power in the region, but we are also very much concerned with the strategic balance between India and its neighbours and also of course with the Kashmir dispute. We visited the region in late November, splitting into three groups in order to cover as much ground as possible in less than one week. Most of us started in Delhi, with

⁷ Foreign Affairs Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2005–06, *East Asia*, HC 860, para 1

some then visiting Chennai (Madras) and Mumbai (Bombay); another group went from Delhi to Amritsar and thence by road across the border to Lahore, ending in Islamabad. A third group started by visiting Kabul, before joining the others in Islamabad. This was an immensely useful visit and we are grateful to all those who assisted with its planning and execution.

25. The Afghanistan leg of this visit was especially valuable in affording Members of the Committee an opportunity to discuss the situation in that country directly with a wide range of interlocutors. The group met President Karzai and other members of the Afghan government, spoke with representatives of various international organisations working in Afghanistan, and were briefed by senior diplomatic and military figures. This work will be taken forward in the Committee's annual Human Rights inquiry, in the South Asia inquiry and in our new inquiry into Global Security.

Evidence on Iran (HC, 2005–06, 904–i)

26. Since the Committee reported on Iran in 2004, we have continued to monitor developments there closely. In February 2006, the then Foreign Secretary gave oral evidence on Iran. The Committee hosted a visit to Westminster by a group of members of the Iranian parliament, in the course of which we were able to have some useful discussions with our counterparts. We have also held informal meetings with Iranian diplomats, both in the United Kingdom and at the United Nations.

Evidence on the Middle East (HC, 2005–06, 1583–i)

27. With the House in recess during the majority of the conflict between Israeli and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon in the Summer of 2006, we felt it was important that Parliament should exercise some kind of scrutiny of the Government's response to the crisis, both as a diplomatic issue and as a consular emergency. We therefore asked the Minister for the Middle East, Dr Kim Howells, to give oral evidence in September. We believe this was a useful exercise, which demonstrated the ability of committees to hold ministers to account, notwithstanding Parliament being in recess. With the recent decision of the House not to continue the experiment of September sittings, such activity may become a more frequent aspect of the work of committees.

4 Scrutiny of Foreign & Commonwealth Office publications

28. The interruption to scrutiny caused by the general election of 2005 meant that we produced two Reports in 2006 on the annual departmental reports of the FCO—those for 2004–05 and for 2005–06. We also conducted our annual exercise of inquiring into the FCO’s annual report on human rights, and will shortly be hearing evidence on the human rights report for 2006. We welcome the opportunity scrutiny of these reports provides to look at a broad sweep of policy, as well as to focus on a number of issues which might otherwise not readily fit into our programme of work.

29. In addition to this regular scrutiny activity, we heard evidence in November 2006 from a number of former diplomats on the FCO’s strategy White Paper, *Active Diplomacy in a changing world*.

Second Report of Session 2005–06, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2004–05 (HC 522)

Eighth Report of Session 2005–06, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2005–06 (HC 1371)

30. Our scrutiny of the annual departmental reports of the FCO is at the heart of our work. The reports prepared by each government department are the main tools for parliamentary scrutiny of the executive’s administrative and financial record. Policy work may always be seen as the more exciting area, both in government and in parliament, but scrutiny of expenditure and administration is as important as scrutiny of policy.

31. The two Reports we produced in 2006—one delayed, as explained above, by the 2005 general election—focused to a large extent on the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the FCO. This was due in no small part to the chance discovery of the existence of two reports carried out for the FCO into aspects of its administration: the review by consultants Collinson Grant of the FCO’s management and leadership; and the internal report by Norman Ling on the FCO’s new administration information system, Prism. We had to ask for copies of both reports to be supplied, having been told nothing about the reviews at the time they were carried out.

32. Both reports were critical of the FCO in some respects, but this was no reason to suppress them. We return to the issue of openness and accountability in the ‘Departmental response’ chapter of this Report.⁸ For the purposes of this section, we note that the FCO asserts that it has taken many of the recommendations of Collinson Grant, Ling, this Committee and others on board; in the coming year, we will be looking for evidence that it has indeed done so.

33. The comprehensive spending review (CSR), which is under way as we prepare this Report, provides an important context for our work on the administration and expenditure

8 See paras 57 to 59 below

of the FCO in financial year 2006–07. In common with other government departments, the FCO is having to justify its expenditure plans, and stands to end up with far less funding than it has sought. If the FCO is indeed unsuccessful in making the case within government as a whole for the level of funding which it believes is necessary, painful choices may have to be made. Already, Posts have been closing or merging. Some have been relatively minor consular or trade Posts, but others have been sovereign Posts, such as the Embassy in Madagascar.

34. Less obvious, perhaps, than the closure of Posts is the constant ‘cheeseparing’ that goes on in an organisation such as the FCO when it has to find efficiency savings and cut costs. As the CSR process comes to a head, we will be looking for signs that the FCO is having to make economies which might jeopardise either the level of service it gives to the British people in promoting and defending the United Kingdom’s interests, or the morale of the men and women who provide that service.

First Report of Session 2005–06, Human Rights Annual Report 2005 (HC 574)

35. Our Report on the FCO’s annual human rights report for 2005 welcomed many of the changes the FCO has introduced in both the presentation and the coverage of human rights issues. In our commentary on the FCO’s report, we considered a number of themes, such as the international human rights architecture, the human rights dimension of the ‘war on terror’, democratisation, the arms trade and military assistance, and corporate social responsibility. We also looked in detail at human rights issues in countries such as the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Iran, China and Nepal.

36. We will be making our Report on the FCO’s 2006 human rights report in April.

Guantánamo Bay

37. We have commented on the detention by the United States authorities of several hundred ‘unlawful enemy combatants’ at the Department of Defense detention facility in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, in each of our human rights Reports since the camp was opened in 2002, and also in our Reports on foreign policy aspects of the war against terrorism. In September 2006, seven of us spent a full day at Guantánamo Bay, where we were able to see for ourselves the conditions in which the detainees are held and to ask questions of the camp authorities. Ours was the first delegation from a national parliament other than the US Congress to visit the camp.

38. We later visited HM Prison Belmarsh, in order to be able to compare the conditions in which suspected terrorists have been held in the United Kingdom and at Guantánamo. We will be producing a Report on Guantánamo early in 2007.

5 Scrutiny of legislation

39. It has been some years since the FCO was the lead department on primary legislation. Unlike most select committees, therefore, the Foreign Affairs Committee has neither reported on a Bill that is before the House, nor has it inquired into a draft Bill.

Private Military Companies

40. The publication by the FCO of a Green Paper on private military companies in February 2002 had been intended to open a debate which would lead to better regulation of such companies.⁹ Our predecessor Committee reported on the Green Paper in August 2002.¹⁰ At the time, no-one anticipated that such companies would come to play a highly significant role in providing security for businesses, journalists and indeed for diplomats in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. When Members of this Committee have travelled to conflict zones, we have been protected by such companies, which are under contract to the FCO. We published an example of such a contract and other relevant material with our most recent Report on foreign policy aspects of the war against terrorism.¹¹

41. In March 2006, we asked the then Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, why there had been no progress in bringing forward specific, legislative proposals for regulation of these companies. Mr Straw told us that

I am glad you reminded me of this. I will pass on to business managers and others, should the Committee wish it, the concern of your Committee because I, too, wish to see legislation in hand and I have been working on this for the last two weeks. ... I frankly do not think this is too difficult an issue ...¹²

Ironically, in view of Mr Straw's move in May 2006 from the FCO to become Leader of the House and thus the Cabinet Minister in charge of the Government's legislative programme, no Bill was announced in the Queen's Speech of 15 November 2006.

42. We regard this total inaction as highly unsatisfactory. The Government itself identified a need, and it was strongly supported by the Foreign Affairs Committee in seeking to deal with it. This is an issue on which we as a Committee will continue to press strongly in 2007, and we hope by the time we make our next annual report to be able to record that we have been able to comment on a relevant piece of legislation.

Constitutional Orders affecting Overseas Territories

43. Changes to the constitutions of the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories are made by the Privy Council, which causes the Foreign Secretary to lay a draft Order before

9 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Private Military Companies: Options for Regulation*, HC (2001–02) 577, February 2002

10 Foreign Affairs Committee, Ninth Report of Session 2001–02, *Private Military Companies*, HC 922

11 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism*, HC 573, Ev 102–145

12 *ibid*, Q 226

Parliament. Although such Orders are laid in draft, they are subject to no parliamentary procedure, which means they may neither be amended nor rejected by Parliament. Following correspondence between this Committee and the FCO in 2002, Ministers agreed that all such draft Orders would, where possible, be sent to the Committee for comment 28 days before being made by the Privy Council.¹³

44. We accept that the constitutional changes brought about by this archaic procedure will have been the subject of consultation with the people affected by them. In the case of the recently agreed changes to the constitution of Gibraltar, for example, a popular referendum has been held. However, it is only in the United Kingdom Parliament that Ministers are held to account. We continue to find it unsatisfactory, therefore, that no real parliamentary scrutiny of these Orders is possible.

13 Written evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee, *Overseas Territories*, HC 114 (2003–04)

6 Other scrutiny activities

Scrutiny of associated public bodies

45. It has been the normal practice of the Committee to consider the work of the major associated public bodies of the FCO—the British Council, and the BBC World Service—as part of the annual exercise of looking into the FCO’s departmental report. However, in 2005 the Government asked Lord Carter of Coles to conduct a review of ‘public diplomacy’—a term which embraces much of the work of both bodies—and we therefore decided to carry out our own follow-up exercise, which we describe in the following paragraphs. For 2006, we have returned to our usual practice of reporting on the British Council and the BBC World Service in our report on the FCO’s annual departmental report.

Third Report of Session 2005–06, Public Diplomacy (HC 903)

46. Lord Carter’s Review was established to examine the effectiveness and value for money of the Government’s public diplomacy work. He made a number of recommendations intended to improve the relationship between central government and the two associated public bodies engaged in that work on public diplomacy, notably the British Council. We agreed with many of Lord Carter’s conclusions and in our Report we made some suggestions of our own, as well as commenting directly on the performance of the British Council and BBC World Service.

47. The Public Diplomacy Report contains a good example of a cross-cutting issue, which we have been able to raise in more than one context. For some time, the BBC has been seeking to start an Arabic language television service. The Committee first commented on this proposal in its Report on the FCO’s departmental report for 2003–04, when it noted that the Treasury’s refusal to fund such a service represented a “missed opportunity”, and called for the decision to be reversed.¹⁴ The issue was picked up again in successive Reports on the FCO and on foreign policy aspects of the war against terrorism, with the Committee consistently supporting the creation of such a service as potentially an important counterweight to Arabic media reports of news from the Middle East and elsewhere. Finally, in our Report on Public Diplomacy, we were able to welcome news that the channel would, after all, be set up, although we are still pressing for it to be funded to a level which will allow it to broadcast for 24 hours a day.¹⁵

Financial scrutiny

48. Our scrutiny of the FCO’s expenditure and resources is undertaken mainly—but not exclusively—in the context of our annual inquiries into its departmental reports.¹⁶ Of the

14 Foreign Affairs Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2003–04, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2003–2004*, HC 745, para 161

15 Foreign Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session 2005–06, *Public Diplomacy*, HC 903, para 153

16 See paras 28 to 37 above

financial issues we have commented on in 2005 and 2006, there are two to which we wish to draw attention as examples of the scrutiny process.

Security of Posts

49. The ‘war on terror’ has had many consequences, including an increased threat level faced by those who work in diplomatic, trade and consular Posts abroad. This has created a new requirement for improvements to the physical security of buildings used by FCO staff. In our Report on the departmental report for 2004–05, we recommended that,

... the FCO maintain its commitment to ensuring that adequate safety and security measures are put in place, with an appropriate level of funding. This funding should be in addition to the FCO’s agreed public expenditure allocation, in recognition of the exceptional nature of the cost of protecting personnel and property from terrorist attacks.¹⁷

50. The FCO provided us with a full response, in which it stated that expenditure on security works at Posts has risen from an average of £2 to £3 million per year in 2003 to £16.7 million for the financial year 2005–06.¹⁸ We welcomed this in our Report on the departmental report for 2005–06, commenting that “It is important that Parliament and the Treasury take their responsibilities no less seriously” than does the FCO.¹⁹ We will certainly continue to add our weight to efforts to ensure that the United Kingdom’s diplomatic, trade and consular staff, including locally engaged staff, are so far as possible protected from the deadly threats to which they are exposed.

Fraud

51. Any large organisation operating on a global basis will find that from time to time it is the victim of frauds, whether perpetrated on it by others or carried out by its own employees. As we discovered in the course of our inquiries into its two most recent departmental reports, the FCO has been no exception. Large-scale or long-running frauds have been discovered in the past two years in Posts in Iraq, Israel, Mongolia and the Dominican Republic.

52. Initially, the FCO was unwilling to inform us of these events, although there are well-established reporting procedures within government, which have of course been followed. More recently, the FCO has recognised the importance of openness on this issue and has informed us of large-scale frauds as they have been discovered. This has, however, been an informal arrangement and so in our Report on the FCO’s departmental report for 2005–06 we suggested a set of criteria which could be applied to cases of fraud in the FCO, in order that the FCO might be able better to judge the circumstances in which it should inform us. Our recommendation was as follows:

17 Foreign Affairs Committee, Second Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2004–05*, HC 522, para 132

18 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Second Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee 2005–06, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2004–05, Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs*, Cm 6791, response to recommendation 34

19 Foreign Affairs Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2005–06*, HC 1371, para 100

We recommend that the FCO inform this Committee promptly, and if appropriate before it is made public, of any fraud which is significant in terms of the sum lost, or which involves important questions of principle, or which raises doubts about the effectiveness of existing systems, or which contains lessons which might be of wider interest.²⁰

53. We commend this formulation to our colleagues on other departmentally related select committees who may be unaware, as we formerly were, until some time after the event of the scale of frauds being perpetrated in or on the government department which they monitor.

Scrutiny of major appointments

54. For some years now, the Committee has expressed its intention of scrutinising any major diplomatic or consular appointment of a person from outside the diplomatic service. We were therefore disappointed that the only such appointments to be made in recent years were made during the period when there was no Committee in existence, at the time of the general election. As we noted in our Report on the FCO's annual departmental report for 2004–05,

Both appointments were *faits accomplis* by the time the Committee was nominated in the new Parliament, so we did not hold hearings with them. It is our intention, should comparable nominations be made during this Parliament, to move with some expedition to hold 'confirmatory hearings,' hopefully before the appointments are formally made.²¹

Evidence on UK Trade and Investment (HC, 2006–07, 136–i)

55. The Government's export trade and inward investment promotion organisation, UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) reports to both the Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs and for Trade and Industry. Trade Minister Ian McCartney, likewise, is a minister in both departments of state. This arrangement is reflected in the scrutiny arrangements of the House, which means that both the Foreign Affairs and Trade and Industry Committees are responsible for parliamentary oversight of UKTI. In the case of the Foreign Affairs Committee, we frequently consider the trade and investment aspects of our inquiries into countries or regions—such as the recent inquiry into East Asia—and we have visited many trade offices abroad in the course of our work. However, it is some years since we looked at the work of UKTI in its own right.

56. In July 2006, UKTI published its five-year forward strategy, *Prosperity in a Changing World*.²² We invited UKTI's Chief Executive, Andrew Cahn, to appear before us in December 2006 to answer questions on the strategy and on other aspects of the work of

20 Foreign Affairs Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2005–06*, HC 1371, para 76

21 Foreign Affairs Committee, Second Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2004–05*, HC 522, para 142

22 UK Trade and Investment, *Prosperity in a Changing World*, July 2006, www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

UKTI. We found it a useful exercise in accountability, and will consider how to take this work forward.

7 Departmental response

57. In 2005 and 2006, the FCO has maintained its generally very good record of responding to our Reports on time, and has continued to issue its responses as full Command Papers. With the exception of the response to the Report of the Quadripartite Committee, all responses in the past two years were issued within, or very slightly over, the conventional period of two months. Responses to the Reports of the Quadripartite Committee, on which the FCO leads, but which involves at least three other government departments, are often delayed.

58. In both of our Reports on the FCO's departmental reports, we commented on the continuing problem of eliciting information from the FCO. The situation has not improved as a result of the Freedom of Information Act, which was supposed to create a culture of openness in Whitehall. As we have noted in our Reports, the FCO has consistently failed to inform us even of the existence of highly relevant documents. When we have found out about them, the FCO has been reluctant to supply us with copies. We concluded in our Report on the FCO's departmental report for 2004–05 that there is “evidence of a disturbing aversion on the part of FCO management to proper scrutiny of its activities.”²³

59. We had hoped that this would change, as both the previous Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Michael Jay, and his successor from mid-2006, Sir Peter Ricketts, had undertaken to supply us with quarterly summaries of matters considered by the FCO's Board of Management. We noted with some disappointment that as at November 2006, we had yet to receive one of these reports.²⁴ It is with increasing concern and annoyance that we now report there has been no change. The FCO's failure to co-operate with this Committee in carrying out the scrutiny function which Parliament has given it is undermining our work. We very much hope it will be possible for us to report a considerable improvement in this situation in our annual Report for 2007.

²³ Foreign Affairs Committee, Second Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2004–05*, HC 522, para 23

²⁴ Foreign Affairs Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2005–06, *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2005–06*, HC 1371, para 14

8 Work of the previous Committee in 2005

60. Our predecessor Committee in the 2001–05 Parliament reported annually on its work, in much the same form as we have adopted for this Report. Because the Committee's existence came to an end on the dissolution of Parliament in April 2005, it did not have an opportunity to make a Report on its work during the last months of that Parliament. Most of the present Committee served also on the previous Committee and we therefore think it appropriate to comment briefly here on the work of that Committee in the period January to April 2005.

Continuing scrutiny of foreign policy

Sixth Report of Session 2004–05, Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism (HC 36)

61. This Report updated the House on developments in Iraq, Afghanistan, the 'war on terror', Middle East peace process and counter-proliferation work since the Committee's previous Report, of July 2004.²⁵ In addition, the Report contained a detailed assessment of the United Kingdom's relations with three countries of the Maghreb—Algeria, Libya and Morocco—which in different ways play key roles in the Arab and Muslim worlds. In its response, the FCO,

... agree[d] that North Africa is of strategic importance to the United Kingdom. ... The Government ... will continue a programme of visits, exchanges and other cooperation and will look for other opportunities to strengthen ties with North Africa. The Government is increasing resources in its Embassies in North Africa to reflect the region's strategic importance.²⁶

Fifth Report of Session 2004–05, Strategic Export Controls (HC 145)

62. The annual scrutiny of arms export controls carried out by the Quadripartite Committee, with the full participation of the Foreign Affairs Committee, examined in detail the changes made to reporting of export licences in 2004, and welcomed several Government initiatives, in particular the publication of quarterly data. The Committee noted that, on the whole, the new system introduced by the Export Control Act 2002 appeared to be working well, although it expressed concern that cuts in the budget and to the staffing of the Export Control Organisation could jeopardise this success.

25 Seventh Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee, Session 2003–04, *Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism*, HC 441

26 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Seventh Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee Session 2003–04, Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism, Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs*, September 2004, CM 6340

Scrutiny of specific foreign policy issues

Second Report of Session 2004–05, Cyprus (HC 113)

63. In the mid-1970s, following Turkey’s military intervention in Cyprus and effective partition of the island, an *ad hoc* select committee on Cyprus was set up to inquire into what went wrong. Since it was created in 1979, the Foreign Affairs Committee has from time to time produced Reports on Cyprus. Unfortunately, a solution to what is generally referred to as “the Cyprus problem” seems as far away as ever. For a period in 2004, however, it looked like a proposal based on a plan put together by the Secretary General of the United Nations with the co-operation of the parties involved might succeed. The Committee’s 2005 Report on Cyprus was to a large extent a *post mortem* on what went wrong in that process, but the Committee also sought to set out some considerations which might assist future attempts at a resolution of this issue, which has assumed increasing importance as Turkey seeks to make progress towards membership of the European Union.

64. The present Committee retains a strong interest in the Cyprus problem, and is visiting the island in January 2007 to update its knowledge and to explore the possibilities for restoring some momentum to the search for a solution.

Third Report of Session 2004–05, The Western Balkans (HC 87)

65. Just before the 2001 general election, the then Foreign Affairs Committee published a comprehensive Report on the situation in the former Republic of Yugoslavia.²⁷ In 2005, the Committee carried out a similar exercise, producing a Report which made recommendations on a broad range of issues affecting the countries of the former Yugoslavia, particularly Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina and Macedonia. The Report received a very positive response from the Government.²⁸

Written evidence on Gibraltar (HC 488)

66. The fact that Ministers in the United Kingdom Government who are responsible for the constitutional, foreign and defence aspects of policy in relation to Gibraltar are not themselves accountable to the electorate of that territory places a responsibility on the United Kingdom Parliament to ensure that the interests of the people of Gibraltar are adequately represented at Westminster. Our predecessor Committee exercised frequent scrutiny of the Government’s policy on Gibraltar and this volume contains a series of exchanges, culminating in the decision to open tripartite talks between the Governments of Spain, the United Kingdom and Gibraltar.

27 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2000–01, *Government Policy Towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Wider Region Following the Fall of Milosevic*, HC 246

28 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Third Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee Session 2004–2005, The Western Balkans, Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs*, April 2005, Cm 6505, April 2005

Written evidence on Zimbabwe (HC 111)

67. The Committee has long taken an interest in Zimbabwe, and has pressed the Government to do more to bring about a satisfactory resolution to that country's problems. Unfortunately, there was little progress to report in 2005 or in 2006, but it is important that the pressure is kept up. This volume is the record of our predecessors' activity in support of public service pensioners in Zimbabwe and of students from Matabeleland wishing to study in the United Kingdom.

Scrutiny of Foreign & Commonwealth Office publications

Fourth Report of Session 2004–05, Human Rights Annual Report 2004 (HC 109)

68. As has been the norm since publication of the first FCO human rights annual report in 1998, this annual exercise looked at the form of the FCO's report, at thematic issues arising from it, and in detail at a large number of regions and countries mentioned—or in some cases not mentioned—in it. In its conclusion, the Committee stated:

Although we believe that it is true to say that respect and concern for human rights underpin and inform much of what the FCO does, the fact that one of its Ministers appears before the Committee each year to defend and explain the Government's record must act as a powerful reminder to all concerned that that record has to be defensible and justifiable.²⁹

We heartily endorse that conclusion.

Other scrutiny activities

Miscellaneous written evidence (HC 489)

69. This volume shows the very wide range of matters in which the Committee was engaged. As well as containing the observations of the Turkish Ambassador and the Cyprus High Commissioner on the Cyprus Report, the volume is mainly a collection of correspondence between the Committee and the FCO, covering issues as diverse as the attempted coup in Equatorial Guinea, the situation in Darfur, political developments in Hong Kong, and a request from the FCO for Ministers to be briefed on anticipated lines of questioning in advance of their appearances before the Committee. The request was granted.

70. The publication of this miscellaneous correspondence demonstrates the commitment of the previous Committee, which is shared by this Committee, to conducting its proceedings as openly as possible. Only material that is classified or in respect of which there are strong, *bona fides*, grounds for maintaining confidentiality is not published.

29 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2004–05, *Human Rights Annual Report 2004*, HC 109, para 201

9 Looking ahead

71. The Committee hopes to complete its work on South Asia early in 2007 and to report to the House in April. We expect also to publish our Report on the FCO's human rights report 2006 at about the same time. Early in 2007, we intend the main focus of our evidence-gathering to be on the situation in the Middle East. We hope to announce our programme of work for the period April to July 2007 by the end of February.

Annex 1

Relevance of the core criteria to work carried out in 2005 and 2006

	Government and Commission policy proposals	Examination of deficiencies	Departmental actions	Associated public bodies	Major appointments	Implementation of legislation	Draft legislation	Expenditure	Evidence from Minister	Public Service Agreements
The Western Balkans	√	(√)	√		(√)			(√)	√	(√)
Cyprus	√	(√)	√			(√)			√	(√)
Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism		√	√	(√)			(√)	√	√	(√)
Strategic Export Controls	(√)	(√)	√			√			√	(√)
East Asia	(√)	(√)	√	(√)				(√)	√	(√)
South Asia	(√)	(√)	√	(√)				(√)	√	(√)
FCO Annual Report 2004–05		√	√		(√)			√		√
FCO Annual Report 2005–06		√	√	√	(√)			√		√
Public Diplomacy	√	√	√	√				√		√
Human Rights Annual Reports 2004 and 2005		(√)	√	(√)		(√)		(√)	√	(√)
<i>Active Diplomacy</i>	√	√	√	(√)	(√)			√		√
Developments in the European Union	√	√	√		(√)		(√)	√	√	(√)
The Middle East (evidence only)		(√)	√	(√)				(√)	√	(√)
Iran (evidence only)	(√)	(√)	√	(√)					√	(√)
UK Trade and Investment (evidence only)	(√)	(√)	√					√		√

√ = the work of the Committee on this inquiry fulfils the criterion
 (√) = the work of the Committee on this inquiry is relevant to the criterion

Annex 2

List of Committee visits in 2005 and 2006, with relevant inquiries

Destination	Dates	Relevant inquiry
Luxembourg and Brussels	17–19 January 2005	Developments in the EU
Morocco, Algeria and Libya (in 2 groups)	6–10 February	Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism
UN (New York) and USA (Washington DC)	27 February–2 March	Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism
United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Palestinian Territories (in 2 groups)	27 November–1 December	Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism
Brussels, Warsaw, Prague and Vienna (in 2 groups)	16–19 January 2006	Developments in the EU
Kuwait and Iraq (Baghdad and Basrah)	22–27 January	Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism
UN (New York) and USA (Washington DC)	26 February–3 March	Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism
China, Hong Kong, Tibet and Taiwan (in 2 groups)	7–19 May	East Asia
Washington DC and Guantánamo Bay	18–21 September	Guantánamo Bay
Helsinki, Sofia and Bucharest (in 2 groups)	8–12 October	Developments in the EU
India, Pakistan and Afghanistan (in 3 groups)	26 November–1 December	South Asia

Annex 3

Informal Meetings held by the Foreign Affairs Committee in 2005 and 2006

Session 2004–05

Wednesday 26th January 2005

HE Ms Dilde Sarbagysheva, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic

Thursday 27th January 2005

HE Mr Yoshiji Nogami, Ambassador of Japan

Thursday 27th January 2005

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the People's Republic of Chile

Tuesday 1st February 2005

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from Ukraine

Thursday 3rd February 2005

Sir Francis Richards, Governor of Gibraltar

Wednesday 23rd February 2005

His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal bin Abdul aziz Al-Saud, Foreign Minister, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Wednesday 23rd February 2005

Mr Ji-Peiding, Vice-Chair, Chinese National People's Congress

Wednesday 23rd February 2005

HE Mr Akin Alptuna, Ambassador of Republic of Turkey

Wednesday 9th March 2005

HE Dr Dragisa Burzan, Ambassador of Serbia and Montenegro

Thursday 10th March 2005

Dr Lubomir Zaoralek, Chairman, Chamber of Deputies, Czech Republic

Wednesday 16th March 2005

HE Gabriel Kassab, Archbishop of Basra

Wednesday 23rd March 2005

Representatives of the Dawa Party, Republic of Iraq

Session 2005–06

Wednesday 20th July 2005

HE Mr Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Tuesday 30th August 2005

Sir Richard Dalton KCMG, Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran

Wednesday 7th September 2005

David T Johnson, Deputy Chief of Mission, and Maura Connelly, Minister Counsellor for Political Affairs, US Embassy

Wednesday 7th September 2005

HE Dr Lachezar Nikolov Matev, Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria

Thursday 8th September 2005

Mrs Carrie Lam, Director-General, and Ms Winnie So, Deputy Director-General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office

Thursday 8th September 2005

Mr Hatem Ben Salem, Secretary of State for European Affairs, Tunisian Republic

Friday 7th October 2005

HE Mr Jalal Talabani, President, and HE Mr Hoshyar Zebari, Foreign Minister, Republic of Iraq

Friday 7th October 2005

Tony Leon, Leader of the Democratic Alliance, Republic of South Africa

Tuesday 11th October 2005

Mr Amiram Magid and Mr Ran Curiel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Israel

Wednesday 12th October 2005

HE Mrs Salome Zourabichvili, Foreign Minister, Georgia

Friday 14th October 2005

HE Mr Rasul Guliyev, Leader of the Azerbaijan Democratic Party

Monday 17th October 2005

Mr Borys Tarasyuk, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ukraine

Wednesday 19th October 2005

Parliamentary Delegation from the Republic of Lithuania

Thursday 20th October

Mr Gideon Sa'ar, Likud MK and Faction and Coalition Chairman, State of Israel

Thursday 3rd November 2005

HE Giancarlo Aragona KCVO, Ambassador of the Italian Republic

Tuesday 8th November 2005

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Kingdom of Bahrain

Wednesday 9th November 2005

Dr Edgar Lin, Taipei's Chief Representative in the United Kingdom

Wednesday 16th November 2005

Delegation from the Republic of Equatorial Guinea

Tuesday 22nd November 2005

Parliamentary Delegation from the Republic of Colombia

Wednesday 23rd November 2005

HE Mr Yoshiji Nogami, Ambassador of Japan

Wednesday 23rd November 2005

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Syrian Arab Republic

Thursday 24th November 2005

HE Zvi Heifetz, Ambassador of the State of Israel

Thursday 24th November 2005

Dr Zuhair Al-Nahar, London Representative of the Iraqi Prime Minister

Thursday 24th November 2005

HE Erlan A Idrissov, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Friday 25th November 2005

HE Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Ambassador to the United Nations

Monday 5th December 2005

Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Speaker of the Norwegian Parliament, and HE Bjarne Lindstrøm, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway

Monday 5th December 2005

Mr Pál Csáky, Deputy Prime Minister, Slovak Republic

Wednesday 7th December 2005

HE Dr Yoon-Je-Cho, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea

Wednesday 7th December 2005

Mr Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court

Thursday 8th December 2005

Bajram Kosumi, Prime Minister, Kosovo

Tuesday 13th December 2005

HE Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Wednesday 14th December 2005

HE Zheng Bijian, Chair of the China Reform Forum

Monday 19th December 2005

HE Mr John Everard, Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Monday 19th December 2005

HE Mr William Ehrman, Ambassador to the People's Republic of China

Monday 9th January 2006

Natasha Kandic, Executive Director, Humanitarian Law Centre, Serbia and Montenegro

Monday 9th January

Vicki Treadell, Head of Mission, Mumbai

Thursday 12th January 2006

Dr Araz Azimov, Deputy Foreign Minister, the Republic of Azerbaijan

Monday 23rd January 2006

Parliamentary Delegation from Romania

Wednesday 25th January 2006

Dr Shai Feldman, Director, Crown Centre for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University

Monday 30th January 2006

Dr Alikbek Jekshenkulov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kyrgyz Republic

Monday 30th January 2006

HE Dr Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Mr Habibullah Qaderi, Minister of Counter-Narcotics and HE Mr Mahmoud Saikal, Deputy Foreign Minister, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Tuesday 31st January 2006

HE Ban Ki-moon, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea

Tuesday 31st January 2006

Professor Gert Weisskirchen MP, Foreign Policy Spokesperson, German Social Democrats.

Wednesday 1st February 2006

Dr Martin Lupu, President of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

Tuesday 7th February

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Tunisian Republic

Tuesday 7th February 2006

HE Mr Zvi Heifetz, Ambassador of the State of Israel

Thursday 9th February 2006

Mrs Carrie Lam, Director-General, and Mr Howard Yam, Assistant Director-General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office

Tuesday 14th February 2006

Arab Ambassadors

Thursday 16th February 2006

HE Dr Valerie Caton, Ambassador to Helsinki

Tuesday 21st February 2006

HE Mr Akin Alptuna, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey

Monday 6th March 2006

HE Dr RM Marty Natalegawa, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia

Monday 6th March 2006

Professor Manuel Hassassian, Palestinian Ambassador

Tuesday 7th March 2006

HE Mr Geoffrey Adams CMG, Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran

Tuesday 7th March 2006

Namdrol Lhamo and Gyaltzen Drolkar, Tibetan Nuns, and Alison Reynolds, Free Tibet Campaign

Thursday 9th March 2006

HE Mr Anton Buteyko, Deputy Foreign Minister, Ukraine

Thursday 9th March 2006

HE Dr Gabriele Matzner-Holzer, Ambassador of the Republic of Austria

Thursday 16th March 2006

Dr Isam Al-Rawi, Shura Council of the Muslim Clerics Association, Ms Sundus Abbas, Director of the Iraqi Women's Leadership Council and Mr Salah Mohammad, Public Relations Manager, Sadrist Current, Republic of Iraq

Tuesday 21st March 2006

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Republic of Burundi

Wednesday 22nd March 2006

Members of the Anglo–Turkish Friendship Group

Thursday 20th April 2006

Mr John Bellinger, Legal Advisor to the US State Department

Tuesday 25th April 2006

Members of the Iranian Majlis

Thursday 27th April 2006

HE Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, Foreign Minister, Sultanate of Oman

Tuesday 2nd May 2006

Sir Vincent Fean KCVO, Ambassador to the Great Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Wednesday 3rd May 2006

HE Mr Zha Peixin, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China

Wednesday 3rd May

Ms Sarah Wu, Director-General, and Mr Duncan Pescod, Special Representative, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office

Wednesday 3rd May 2006

Dr Edgar Lin, Taipei Representative Office in the UK

Monday 22nd May 2006

HE Zurab Noghaideli, Prime Minister, Georgia

Thursday 25th May 2006

Mr Xu Wenli, Chairman, Chinese Democratic Party in Overseas Exile

Thursday 25th May 2006

HE Mr Margus Laidre, Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia

Tuesday 13th June 2006

Mr Patrick Cockburn, Middle East Correspondent for the Independent

Tuesday 13th June 2006

Mr. Ji Peiding, Vice Minister, Foreign Affairs Committee, People’s Republic of China

Tuesday 20th June 2006

Mr James Mulvenon, Deputy Director, Centre for Intelligence Research and Analysis, Washington DC

Tuesday 27th June 2006

Dato' Mukhriz bin Mahathir, Chairman, International Bureau of United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) Youth, Federation of Malaysia.

Wednesday 28th June 2006

HE Dr Adel Abdul Mehdi, Vice-President, Republic of Iraq

Monday 3rd July

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Tuesday 4th July 2006

Mr Valeriu Ostalep, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Moldova

Wednesday 5th July 2006

HE The Honourable Dominic Asquith, Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq

Wednesday 12th July 2006

HE Mr Mark Canning, Ambassador to the Union of Myanmar (Burma)

Friday 14th July 2006

HE Mr Kamalesh Sharma, Indian High Commissioner

Friday 14th July 2006

HE Mr Stewart Eldon CMG OBE, UK Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council

Monday 17th July 2006

Sir Peter Ricketts, UK Permanent Under-Secretary designate, FCO

Monday 17th July 2006

Abdulati al-Obidi, Minister for European Affairs, Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Tuesday 18th July 2006

HE Dr Maleeha Lodhi, High Commissioner, and Mr Abdul Basit, Deputy High Commissioner, Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Tuesday 18th July 2006

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Republic of Bulgaria

Wednesday 19th July 2006

Professor Shai Feldman, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University

Thursday 20th July 2006

HE HRH Prince Mohammed bin Nawaf bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Monday 24th July 2006

Mr Alan Hoo, Chairman, Working Group on Overseas Community of the Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee, Hong Kong, Mr Stephen Wong, Deputy-Solicitor General of Hong Kong SAR, and Sarah Wu, Director-General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office

Monday 24th July 2006

HE Nouri al-Maliki, Prime Minister, Republic of Iraq

Thursday 5th October 2006

Members of the Temporary Committee on the alleged use of European Countries by the CIA for the Transport and Illegal Detention of Prisoners (TDIP), European Parliament

Monday 23rd October 2006

HE Dr Barham Salih, Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of Iraq

Tuesday 31st October 2006

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Friday 10th November 2006

Sir Emyr Jones Parry KCMG, Ambassador to the United Nations

Session 2006–07

Thursday 16th November 2006

HE Dr Maleeha Lodi, High Commissioner of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Tuesday 21st November 2006

HE Tzipi Livni, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, State of Israel

Monday 4th December 2006

Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Wednesday 6th December 2006

HE Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General designate, and HE Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Ambassador to the United Nations

Wednesday 13th December 2006

Delegation from The Republic of Indonesia

Annex 4

Oral evidence sessions

In the final months of the 2001–05 Parliament, the Committee held 4 oral evidence sessions, making a total for that Parliament of 85. From the start of the current Parliament, the Committee has held 34 oral evidence sessions. All this evidence is available on the Committees website, www.parliament.uk/facom.

Session 2004–05

11 January 2005	<i>Human Rights Annual Report 2004</i> Mr Bill Rammell MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Philippa Drew, Director, Global Issues and Ms Alexandra Hall, Head of Human Rights Democracy and Governance Group, Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
12 January 2005	<i>Strategic Export Controls: HMG's Annual Report for 2003, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny</i> Rt Hon Jack Straw MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr Edward Oakden CMG, Director, Defence and Strategic Threats, and Dr David Landsman, Head, Counter-Proliferation Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
13 January 2005	<i>The Western Balkans</i> HE Kai Eide, Norwegian Permanent Representative to NATO
1 February 2005	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Mr Oliver Miles CMG, Chairman, MEC International, Deputy Chairman, Libyan British Business Council, Dr Hugh Roberts, International Crisis Group, and Professor George Joffe, Centre of International Studies, University of Cambridge

Session 2005–06

12 October 2005	<i>Public Diplomacy</i> Rt Hon Lord Kinnock of Bedwelty, Chairman, Sir David Green KCMG, Director-General, and Mr Martin Davidson, Deputy Director-General, British Council
19 October 2005	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Professor Paul Wilkinson, Professor of International Relations and Chair of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, University of St Andrews and Mr Peter Taylor, BBC (Panorama), Nomi Bar-Yaacov, Independent Analyst, former Research Fellow for Conflict Management and Head of the Middle East Conflict Management Programme, International Institute for Strategic Studies.
24 October 2005	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Mr Jack Straw MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr David Richmond CMG, Director General, Defence and Intelligence, and Dr Peter Gooderham, Director, Middle East and North Africa, FCO

26 October 2005	<i>Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2004–05</i> Sir Michael Jay KCMG, Permanent Under-Secretary, Mr Richard Stagg CMG, Director-General (Corporate), Mr David Warren, Director, (Human Resources) and Mr Ric Todd, Director (Finance), Foreign & Commonwealth Office
2 November 2005	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Mr Frank Gardner OBE, Security Correspondent, BBC and Dr Mai Yamani, Research Fellow, Middle East Programme, Chatham House.
9 November 2005	<i>Public Diplomacy</i> Mr Nigel Chapman, Director, and Ms Alison Woodhams, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance, BBC World Service
16 November 2005	<i>Human Rights Annual Report 2005</i> Ms Kate Allen, Director, and Mr Tim Hancock, Head of Policy, Amnesty International UK, and Mr Steve Crawshaw, London Director, Human Rights Watch
23 November 2005	<i>Human Rights Annual Report 2005</i> Ian Pearson MP, Minister of State for Trade, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and Ms Alexandra Hall Hall, Head, Human Rights, Democracy and Governance Group, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
13 December 2005	<i>Developments in the European Union</i> Rt Hon Jack Straw MP, Foreign Secretary, Mr Tim Barrow, Deputy Political Director and Assistant Director of EU External, and Mr David Frost, Deputy Director EU, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
11 January 2006	<i>Developments in the European Union</i> Mr Charles Grant, Director, Centre for European Reform, and Ms Ruth Lea, Director, Centre for Policy Studies
31 January 2006	<i>Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2004, Quarterly Reports for 2005, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny</i> Mr David Hayes, Head of Export Controls, Rolls-Royce plc, and Chairman of the Export Group for Aerospace and Defence (EGAD), Mr Brinley Salzmann, Exports Director, Defence Manufacturers Association and Secretary EGAD, Mr Derek Marshall, Director of Aerospace Defence and Homeland Security, Society of British Aerospace Companies, Ms Bernadette Peers, Compliance Manager, Strategic Shipping Company Ltd, and Mr David Wilson, Export Compliance Manager, EDS Defence Ltd, EGAD; Mr Oliver Sprague, Research and Policy Adviser, Oxfam and UK Working Group on Arms, Mr Roy Isbister, Head of Export Controls and EU Section, Saferworld and UK Working Group on Arms, and Mr Mark Thomas, Broadcaster and Journalist
1 February 2006	<i>East Asia</i> Dr Christopher Hughes, Department of International Relations, Director, Asia Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science and Professor David Wall, Centre of Chinese Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, and Chatham House
8 February 2006	<i>Public Diplomacy</i> Lord Carter of Coles
8 February 2006	<i>Iran</i> Mr Jack Straw MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and Mr David Landsman OBE, Head of Counter-Proliferation Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

8 March 2006	<i>East Asia</i> Dr Linda Yueh, Pembroke College, University of Oxford, and Department of Economics, London School of Economics and Political Science, Professor Jude Howell, Director, Centre for Civil Society, London School of Economics and Political Science, and Professor Yongnian Zheng, Head of Research, China Policy Institute, University of Nottingham, Mr Brad Adams, Director for Asia, Human Rights Watch and Ms Corinna-Barbara Francis, East Asia Team, Amnesty International, Dr Gerard Lyons, Chief Economist, Standard Chartered Bank, and Committee Member, Hong Kong Association, and Lord Powell of Bayswater KCMG, President, China Britain Business Council.
13 March 2006	<i>Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2004, Quarterly Reports for 2005, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny</i> Malcolm Wicks MP, Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry, with responsibility for the Export Control Organisation, Mr Glyn Williams, Director, Ms Jayne Carpenter, Assistant Director, and Mr David Whitehouse, Head of the Licensing Casework Unit, Export Control Organisation, Department of Trade and Industry
15 March 2006	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Rt Hon Jack Straw MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr David Richmond CMG, Director-General, Defence and Intelligence, and Dr Peter Gooderham, Director, Middle East and North Africa.
22 March 2006	<i>East Asia</i> Dr Dafydd Fell, Department of Politics and International Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, Dr Patrick Cronin, Director of Studies, International Institute for Strategic Studies, and Dr John Swenson-Wright, East Asia Institute, University of Cambridge, and Associate Fellow, Chatham House
29 March 2006	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Mr Yahia Said, Research Fellow, London School of Economics and Mr Zaki Chehab, Political Editor, Al Hayat TV.
19 April 2006	<i>Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism</i> Professor Philippe Sands QC and Sir Christopher Meyer KCMG, former Ambassador to Washington.
19 April 2006	<i>Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2004, Quarterly Reports for 2005, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny</i> Mr David Hayes, Head of Export Controls, Rolls-Royce plc, and Chairman of the Export Group for Aerospace and Defence (EGAD), Mr Brinley Salzmann, Exports Director, Defence Manufacturers Association and Secretary EGAD, Ms Bernadette Peers, Compliance Manager, Strategic Shipping Company Ltd, and Mr David Wilson, Export Compliance Manager, EDS Defence Ltd, EGAD
25 April 2006	<i>Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2004, Quarterly Reports for 2005, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny</i> Dr Kim Howells MP, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr Trevor Moore, Deputy Head, and Mr Graham Glover, Head of Arms Trade Unit, Counter-Proliferation Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
26 April 2006	<i>East Asia</i> Mr Aidan Foster-Carter, Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Sociology and Modern Korea, University of Leeds, and Dr Jim Hoare, former member of the Research Cadre of HM Diplomatic Service, Mr John Ashton, Chief Executive, E3G, Third Generation Environmentalism

3 May 2006	<p><i>Developments in the European Union</i> Mr Douglas Alexander MP, Minister for Europe, Mr Anthony Smith, Director, European Political Affairs, and Mr Simon Manley, Former Head, Economic/Central Europe, Foreign and Commonwealth Office</p>
25 May 2006	<p><i>Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2004, Quarterly Reports for 2005, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny</i> Mr Kevin Franklin, Director, Frontiers Customer Unit, Mr Mark Fuchter, Head of the Publications and Restrictions Policy Group, HM Revenue and Customs, and Mr David Green QC, Director, Mr David Richardson, Head of Division C (Border Detections), and Ms Helen Wolkind, Senior Lawyer, Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office</p>
7 June 2006	<p><i>East Asia</i> Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr Sebastian Wood CMG, Director for Asia Pacific, and Mr Denis Keefe, Head of Far Eastern Group, Foreign and Commonwealth Office</p>
13 June 2006	<p><i>Developments in the European Union</i> Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr Anthony Smith, European Political Affairs, and Ms Shan Morgan, Director, EU, Foreign and Commonwealth Office</p>
28 June 2006	<p><i>Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2005–06</i> Sir Michael Jay GCMG, Permanent Under-Secretary, Mr Richard Stagg CMG, Director-General, Corporate Affairs, Mr Ric Todd, Director, Finance, Mr David Warren, Director, Human Resources, Foreign and Commonwealth Office</p>
12 July 2006	<p><i>Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report 2005–06</i> Mr Nigel Chapman, Director and Ms Alison Woodhams, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance, BBC World Service and Sir David Green KCMG, Director-General, Mr Martin Davidson, Deputy Director-General, and Ms Margaret Mayne, Director of Finance and Resources, British Council.</p>
13 September 2006	<p><i>The Middle East</i> Dr Kim Howells MP, Minister of State, Dr Peter Gooderham, Director, Middle East, and Mr Ben Fender, Iran Desk Officer, Foreign and Commonwealth Office</p>
8 November 2006	<p><i>Active Diplomacy for a Changing World</i> Lord Hannay of Chiswick CH, GCMG, former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Sir Jeremy Greenstock GCMG, former Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Director of The Ditchley Foundation, and Matthew Kirk, former British Ambassador to Finland and Director of External Relationships, Vodafone; Carne Ross, Director, Independent Diplomat.</p>

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20 November 2006	<p><i>South Asia</i> Mr. Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, Research Fellow for South Asia, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Dr. Gareth Price, Head of Asia Programme, Chatham House, and Dr. Chris Smith, Associate Fellow, International Security programme, Chatham House.</p>
22 November 2006	<p><i>South Asia</i> Lord Desai, retired Professor of Economics and Director, Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economics, Martin Wolf, Associate Editor and chief economics commentator, Financial Times, Victoria Schofield, Journalist and author of "Kashmir in the Crossfire", and Professor Sumantra Bose, Professor of International and Comparative Politics, Government Department, London School of Economics.</p>
6 December 2006	<p><i>UK Trade and Investment</i> Andrew Cahn CMG, Chief Executive, Ian Fletcher, Director International, Susan Haird, Deputy Chief Executive and Asif Ahmad, Director for Asia, UKTI.</p>

Formal minutes

Wednesday 10 January 2007

Members present:

Mike Gapes, in the Chair

Mr Fabian Hamilton	Sandra Osborne
Mr David Heathcoat-Amory	Mr Greg Pope
Mr John Horam	Mr Ken Purchase
Mr Eric Illsley	Sir John Stanley
Andrew Mackinlay	Gisela Stuart
Mr Malcolm Moss	Richard Younger-Ross

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (The Work of the Committee in 2005 and 2006), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 24 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 25 read, as follows:

The Afghanistan leg of this visit was especially valuable in affording Members of the Committee an opportunity to discuss the situation in that country directly with a wide range of interlocutors. The group met President Karzai and other members of the Afghan government, spoke with representatives of various international organisations working in Afghanistan, and were briefed by senior diplomatic and military figures. This work will be taken forward both in the South Asia inquiry and in our new inquiry into Global Security.

An Amendment made.

Question put, That the paragraph, as amended, be agreed to.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 7	Noes, 2
Mr Fabian Hamilton	Mr Eric Illsley
Andrew Mackinlay	Mr Greg Pope
Mr Malcolm Moss	
Sandra Osborne	
Mr Ken Purchase	
Sir John Stanley	
Ms Gisela Stuart	

Paragraphs 26 to 71 read and agreed to.

Annexes agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report, as amended, be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

The Committee further deliberated.

[Adjourned till Thursday 11 January at 3.00pm