



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Minister of State

20 July 2016

The Hon. Dr Rufus Ewing MP  
Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands  
Hon N J S Francis Building  
Grand Turk  
Turks and Caicos Islands

Dear Premier,

**OVERSEAS TERRITORIES – PRE-JOINT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL  
MEETING**

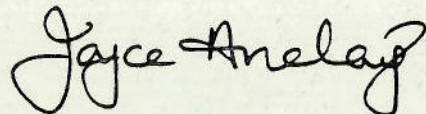
I am delighted to have been re-appointed as Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and to have the privilege of taking on responsibility for the Overseas Territories, with whom we enjoy a unique relationship and shared history. My colleague, the Minister of State for Europe and the Americas, Sir Alan Duncan MP, will have responsibility for the bilateral relationship with the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar and UK interests in the Polar Regions.

I understand that this week you will be hosting in the Turks and Caicos Islands the annual meeting of Territory leaders to discuss your priorities for this year's Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) in November. I wanted to take this opportunity to reassure you of the of the UK Government's continued commitment to the Overseas Territories and my personal commitment to the JMC as the primary forum of political dialogue between the UK and OT governments.

I am aware that the Territories have wide-ranging interests in the EU through your current associate status and that the implications of the referendum result will be a key priority for your discussions. I am very pleased that officials from Europe Directorate in FCO will be able to link in to the session you have on this issue. The previous Prime Minister made clear our commitment fully to involve the Overseas Territories as we prepare for negotiations to exit the EU, in line with your various constitutional relationships with the UK. As Minister, I will continue to champion the interests of the Overseas Territories across Whitehall to ensure your interests are fully taken into account. And as the new Foreign Secretary has underlined, the UK's exit from the EU also provides an important opportunity to recalibrate valuable relationships with our traditional partners, including the Territories and the Commonwealth.

I look forward to hearing your views and those of other Territory leaders on these points and on your wider objectives for this year's Council. I very much look forward to meeting you at the JMC in November.

I am copying this letter to the Premiers of Bermuda, Cayman, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat, the Chief Ministers of Anguilla and Gibraltar, elected representatives of the Falkland Islands, St Helena and Ascension and representatives of Tristan da Cunha and Pitcairn.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayce Anelay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**THE RT HON BARONESS ANELAY OF ST JOHNS DBE  
MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH, UN AND  
OVERSEAS TERRITORIES**