

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

1 June 2026

**Unpaid appointment with the Royal United Services Institute Europe: Application under the Business Appointment Rules from Dame Deborah Bronnert DCMG, former Director General Europe and Irregular Migration and Senior Responsible Officer for the Germany State Visit at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.**

The Civil Service Commission (the Commission) has considered an application for advice under the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) from **Dame Deborah Jane Bronnert DCMG**, formerly Director General Europe and Irregular Migration and Senior Responsible Officer for the Germany State Visit at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The application is for an unpaid, part-time role as an **Advisory Board Member** at the **Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Europe**. Further detail on the content of the application is in the Annex. The Commission's advice is required as Dame Deborah is a civil servant at SCS Pay Band 3. Her last day of service was 30 April 2026.

The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. They aim to avoid any reasonable concerns that: a civil servant may be influenced in their official duties by the risk of reward; a civil servant may improperly exploit access to information; and an organisation may gain an improper influence through the employment of a civil servant.

The Commission's advice<sup>1</sup> is that the appointment with RUSI Europe should be made subject to the following conditions:

1. Privileged information – Dame Deborah should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of herself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to her from her time in office.
2. Lobbying – For two years from her last day in office, until 30 April 2028, Dame Deborah should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of RUSI Europe (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients). She should also not use, directly or indirectly, her contacts in the government and/or civil service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage

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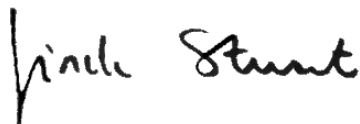
<sup>1</sup> See [Advice under the Business Appointment Rules](#) for details applying to all advice issued by the Civil Service Commission.

- RUSI Europe (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients).
3. Bids and contracts – For two years from her last day in the civil service, until 30 April 2028, Dame Deborah should not provide advice to RUSI Europe on a bid or contract relating to the UK Government or its arm's length bodies.

The Rules set out that civil servants must abide by the Commission's advice. It is Dame Deborah's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment and to understand any other rules and regulations she may be subject to in parallel with the Commission's advice.

Dame Deborah must seek advice if she proposes to extend or otherwise change her role with the organisation. Once this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, the letter will be published on the Civil Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gisela Stuart'.

**Gisela Stuart**

First Civil Service Commissioner

## Annex A: The application

### Applicant assessment

1. According to its website, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) is the world's oldest, and the UK's leading, defence and security think tank. It is a UK-registered charity and a Royal Charter body based in London. It aims to inform, influence and enhance public debate on defence, security and geopolitical challenges. RUSI Europe is a subsidiary based in Brussels that is registered as an international non-profit focused on Europe and the transatlantic community.
2. As an Advisory Board Member, Dame Deborah will provide advice to the Director General on the development of the institute's programmes and agenda, including fundraising. Members of the Advisory Board may be called upon occasionally to contribute in other ways, relevant to their expertise and experience. Dame Deborah stated she will be responsible for attending two or three meetings per year.
3. Dame Deborah noted that her role would not involve direct contact with government, but given the close links between the institution and the UK Government, she suspects that there may be some engagement with the FCDO, Ministry of Defence, and/or Cabinet Office.
4. As Director General Europe and Irregular Migration, Dame Deborah was responsible for managing the UK-European diplomatic strategy and overseeing the network of British embassies and staff across the region. She was also responsible for the FCDO's function on irregular migration. In her role as Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Germany State Visit, she stated she had overall oversight and responsibility for the inward visit of German President Steinmeier in December 2025.
5. Dame Deborah also held a role in wider government as the Special Envoy to the Armenia/Azerbaijan Peace Process in part linked to the European Political Community (EPC) Summit at Blenheim, Oxford.
6. Dame Deborah stated she was not responsible for regulatory, funding or any other decisions affecting RUSI Europe at any time in her last two years in the civil service.

### The Commission's analysis

7. *Application level.* As a Level 1 application for an unpaid role, the Commission's analysis applies the principle that this category of appointment is generally recognised as posing a lower risk to government integrity.
8. *Risk of reward.* The Commission noted that the institution has received government contracts and grants and has a close relationship with the UK Government. However, Dame Deborah stated that she was not responsible for decisions affecting RUSI Europe in office. Further, the role is unpaid and so the risk that the offer was made as a reward for decisions made during her time in office is low.
9. *Access to information.* Access to information. As a former senior civil servant working across European policy Dame Deborah would have been exposed to privileged information that could benefit RUSI Europe. However, the standard privileged information ban sufficiently mitigates the risks associated with her access. The ban also prevents Dame Deborah from making use of any privileged insight gained from her time as UK Special Envoy to the Armenia/Azerbaijan Peace Process.
10. *Improper influence.* Dame Deborah will retain a significant network of contacts within government from her time at the FCDO which could offer RUSI Europe an unfair advantage, whether real or perceived. Dame Deborah stated that her role would not involve direct contact with government, though she anticipates there may be some engagement with government due to RUSI Europe's relationship with government. While the lobbying ban does not prevent all contact with government, Dame Deborah must not directly or indirectly lobby the government for changes to policy, contracts, or funding, as to do so would risk granting RUSI Europe an unfair advantage. The Commission therefore considered that the standard lobbying condition sufficiently mitigates the risks in this instance.