



RULING ON ATTENDANCE OF SIMON CASE AT THE UK COVID-19 INQUIRY MODULE 2 HEARINGS

Introduction

1. On 9 November 2023, I received an application (“the Application”) from the Government Legal Department requesting that Simon Case, the Cabinet Secretary, be excused from giving oral evidence during the current 2023 Module 2 Inquiry hearings due to ill health. The Application was supported by a detailed medical report.
2. On 20 November 2023 Module 2 Core Participants were notified of the Application and provided with a short summary of the medical report. The contents of that letter, which contained confidential medical information relating to Mr Case, are protected by a Restriction Order that I made pursuant to section 19 of the Inquiries Act 2005 dated 20 November 2023. Core Participants were informed that I was minded to excuse Mr Case from giving oral evidence in 2023 and were invited to make written submissions in response by Thursday 23 November. No submissions were received.
3. This is my ruling on the Application.

Decision

4. I have carefully considered the importance of Mr Case’s evidence to the issues being investigated in Module 2, as well as the information I have been provided with about the health and wellbeing of Mr Case. Having reviewed the Application and medical report, and having allowed Core Participants to make submissions in response, I am satisfied that Mr Case should be excused from giving oral evidence at the Module 2 hearings in 2023. However, it very much remains my intention that Mr Case should give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

5. I direct that Mr Case's representatives at the Government Legal Department provide the Inquiry with an updated report in relation to Mr Case's ability to give oral evidence at the end of January 2024 or upon Mr Case's return to work, whichever is the sooner. Core Participants will be kept apprised of the position and in due course I expect to convene a special hearing for Module 2, for the purpose of hearing oral evidence from Mr Case.

The Right Honourable Baroness Hallett
Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry
24 November 2023