

WITNESS STATEMENT

CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B; Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1

Statement of **Craig MURRAY**

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Age if under 18 **Over 18** (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: **Development Consultant**

This statement (consisting of: pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything in it which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature:

Date:

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I joined the Foreign Office in 1984 direct from University in the 'fast stream' process. I held a number of posts including second secretary in Lagos, then Head of the Maritime section in London and the Cyprus section. Around 1992-1993 I was also head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) embargo surveillance section both before and after the first Gulf War. Its role was to monitor Iraqi attempts of weapons procurement. I then served in Poland as first secretary in the Embassy and returned to London as deputy Head of the Africa Department, and thereafter in Ghana as Deputy High Commissioner. I was security cleared to Developed Vetted level and because of my earlier work in relation to Iraqi arms embargo I was given extra security clearances enabling me to view other sensitive intelligence material up to including various extra codewords over and above Top Secret. I have never worked for either the Security Service (SYS) or Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). I speak both Polish and Russian.

In August 2002 I took up the role as Ambassador, at the Embassy in Uzbekistan. I was given very little formal pre posting briefing by the FCO and met the outgoing ambassador Chris INGRAM only for about half an hour during which we only discussed a staff issue regarding an embassy member called Chris HIRST.

The staff at the Uzbekistan Embassy included a Defence Attaché, an assistant, a Deputy Head of Mission, a third secretary, a management officer, consular officer and assistant. My number two was an acting second secretary called Karen MORAN. I didn't have many staff or much ability to discuss matters with them.

After my arrival in Uzbekistan as part of my role I viewed certain intelligence material originating from Uzbekistan. This material came to me from SIS in London and was sent to them by the CIA via the CIA Headquarters in Washington. It was sent to me if SIS thought it appropriate information I should be aware of. The only person security cleared to see such telegrams were I and Karen MORAN in her role as Deputy Head of Mission (DHM).

I was aware even before I arrived in Uzbekistan that the Uzbekistan security services had a terrible reputation for torture that included for example using boiling water on individuals as well as electrocution. I never whilst in Uzbekistan ever had direct involvement with the Uzbekistan security services, SIS officers came out on liaison visits but I don't recall who they were or who they met.

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In my new role I was proactive in meeting local Uzbekistan people and I had only been there a couple of weeks when I attended a trial of dissidents accused of terrorism. More than one witness tried to change their original account claiming it was made under torture. I found them credible that they were tortured to give a false account. The United Nations special rapporteur on torture came out to Uzbekistan to do a special report and we arranged for torture victims to see him.

The intelligence that was sent to me by SIS at this time concerned me on two grounds; firstly it showed how systematic the torture was by the Uzbekistan security services as the intelligence was coming from tortured detainees. And secondly the quality of the intelligence was inaccurate. I knew these from my first hand experience in Uzbekistan and I knew individual facts could be shown to be false.

I came to these conclusions after about three to four months of being in Uzbekistan. This was due to the fact I had been doing some work around tortured Uzbekistan detainees and I could see links with the intelligence I was seeing. Most of the intelligence didn't name the detainees but it had similar trends such as Al Qaeda (AQ) membership or attending AQ training camps which wasn't true. I was aware that my defence attaché Colonel RIDOUT had been to one training camp location that was cited in the intelligence reports and found they did not exist. I knew that Uzbekistan was getting money and arms from the United States and I believed the Uzbekistan government were exaggerating the AQ threat in response. I believe this was a view shared by colleagues in the Embassy.

My concerns revolved around the intelligence and the cooperation between the Uzbekistan security services and CIA, I was uneasy about what the US were not doing to stop the torture. I decided something was going wrong and London (the FCO) must have not known about the torture. I asked Karen MORAN who had regular meetings with the US mission in Uzbekistan, to ask the US about the intelligence flow from torture and to confirm from the US mission that it in fact was not from torture. Karen told me that the US response she received was that the intelligence was from torture however it was justified in the 'war on terror'. This response was possibly from the US Mission political counsellor.

On about 17th December 2002 I wrote a telegram back to London setting out my concerns. I have obtained a redacted version of that telegram under a Freedom of Information request I made I produce a copy of which as CJM/1 telegram number 147 of 17/12/2002 at 0345. It was addressed to the permanent under secretary (PUS) Sir Michael JAY as he was the head of the Diplomatic Service and Michel WOOD the Foreign Office legal advisor as it dealt with legal issues. I also sent it to relevant UK Missions (UKMIS) who had interest/deal in torture policy, these included New York, Geneva, Vienna and 'Organisation Security and Cooperation in Europe' (OSCE) of which Uzbekistan is a member. If you send a telegram on policy it is practice that it is also sent to other UK Missions who have an interest as with this telegram.

I don't know how I received a response but I got a message back stating that I could discuss the matters with William ERHMAN during an Ambassadors conference that I was due to attend in London in January 2003. I believe this message originated from Sir Michael JAY and I believe it is back referenced as telegram 323 of 2002 which appears on the next telegram I sent.

In January 2003 I returned as planned to London for a few days and could not get hold of William ERHMAN so the conversation I intended never took place with him. I subsequently returned to Tashkent, Uzbekistan and it was around this time I was aware public concern had just started regarding detainee issues in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay. I seemed to be the only person within the FCO who was worried about it. I had never done this before by that I mean flagged up these kinds of issues/concerns.

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On 22nd January 2003 I sent another telegram this was addressed to William ERHMAN again I produce a redacted copy that was supplied to me under a Freedom Of Information request I made as exhibit CJM/2 on it there is the back reference 323 which I believe was the response originating from Michael JAY that I previously referred to. The telegram essentially states the same as my first. I did not receive a response to any of the points; this is unheard of because if an Ambassador writes a telegram in relation to a policy matter there is always response. I was frustrated and could not understand why there was no written reply on this policy on torture.

Shortly after this I was asked back to London to discuss the issues I had raised. I can't recall what method this summons was communicated to me. I believed I was coming back to London to see Sir Michael JAY however I never did see him.

I thought I was in trouble due to the nature of the recall to London and I suspected I was going to be sacked.

I returned to London on 6th March 2003 I don't recall what dictated the timing but it was two weeks before the war started in Iraq. At that time, with the 'dodgy dossier' going around supporting the war and my concerns regarding the inaccurate intelligence I had seen, the atmosphere was not good at the FCO. It was not the best time to be saying openly that our intelligence was not reliable. A retired ambassador had stated that we should not go to war as the intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) was not reliable. From evidence subsequently given in the Chilcott enquiry I believe Sir Michael WOOD had advised Jack STRAW at the time, it was not legal to go to war in Iraq. So all this was going on around my return to London.

I was called into a meeting on the 7th or 8th March 2003 with Linda DUFFIELD who was the Director Wider Europe (DWE) and my counter signing manager. This meeting took place in her office and she told me Sir Michael JAY wanted to see me but was too busy. With her at the meeting were Michael WOOD and Matthew KIDD who I believe was from MI6 (SIS), he was introduced as being Permanent Under Secretary Department (PUSD) which is a liaison department that deals with SIS. It was a two part meeting with either a private discussion between Linda and myself and then a general discussion with everyone present or the other way around I can't recall now. She told me that 'JAY was not pleased I had put things in writing, things like that should not be in writing.' In the general meeting with all three she stated Jack Straw had seen my telegrams (CJM/1 and CJM/2) and they 'troubled him and he lost sleep at night over this'. Also that he had met 'C' Sir Richard DEARLOVE and discussed whether, in relation to the 'war on terror' should intelligence from torture be used. Also that Jack Straw made the decision that I should not send over 'emotional and melodramatic' telegrams like these and that intelligence and torture were ministerial decisions.

In the general meeting Sir Michael WOOD stated he had looked at the United Nations convention on torture and that it was his legal position that if we didn't ask someone to be tortured but got intelligence from torture then we were doing nothing illegal.

I asked him about complicity in torture and Article 3 and 4 of the UN Convention on torture. Sir Michael WOOD stated that he didn't know but Article 16 allowed us to get intelligence from torture but it could not be used in court. Mr KIDD went on to add that intelligence coming from Tashkent was useful to SIS. I told him the intelligence wasn't true, he disagreed with this.

A formal response to my telegrams was read out to me by Linda with everyone present and she told me the response would not be sent as these things were best not put in writing.

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I produce a copy of the minutes of this meeting again supplied to me under a Freedom of Information request I made which I exhibit as CJM/3. I do not accept the minutes as a full and accurate account of the meeting. It was not sent to me in draft afterwards for 'signing off' which was practice. It also mentions I was given a revised telegram which I was not, I was shown it but not to keep and it was never sent to me.

After this meeting I went back to Tashkent. Later in 2005 I obtained a message dated 14/3/2003 supplied to me under a Freedom of Information request I made which I exhibit as CJM/4. This indicates Jack Straw saw the minutes of the meeting referred to in exhibit CJM/3. There were hundreds of meetings at the FCO each day and it would be very rare for minutes to be seen by Jack STRAW unless he had previous documents regarding the matter i.e. my original telegrams and an explanatory briefing from Sir Michael Jay or another official. Simon McDONALD was Jack Straw's number 2 private secretary and Alan CHARLTON was Head of Personnel.

Whilst in Tashkent I was concerned my career was ruined, I had upset my line managers and I decided I wasn't going to say anything else as I was extremely concerned about my future.

I was then told that my third secretary Chris HIRST had attacked a blind person in the street with a baseball bat. I had been told by my predecessor that he had been accused of doing something similar before, but that my predecessor had supported him, this was the staff issue I referred to earlier in this statement. I personally had witnessed his verbally violent outbursts in a local bar before. I knew that as a result of this baseball bat incident that he had to go, which he did. After this I then found papers regarding Chris HIRST that had been hidden from me by his partner Karen MORAN and I learnt she had destroyed other similar documents. As a result of this Karen had to go as well.

At this time I was not receiving any replies from London and asked them why they were ignoring me but got no response. In June 2003 Colin REYNOLDS from the Foreign Office arrived in Uzbekistan ostensibly to find out what was happening at the Embassy with the sudden departure of Karen and Chris, he had been sent out by Alan CHARLTON. All the Embassy staff was seen by Colin and the staff told me that in fact he was asking them not about Chris/Karen as they expected but things about me such as my drinking habits and whether I used prostitutes. The staff were confused and surprised. I let Colin finish the interviews of staff and then I asked him what was going on as it seemed to me that he was investigating me. He told me not to worry and that he had been instructed to investigate allegations raised about me. He would not tell me what those allegations were. He later as I understand reported back to London that the staff supported me and there were no issues. I obtained a copy of his findings dated 26/6/2003 supplied to me under a Freedom of Information request I made which I exhibit as CJM/5. This confirms he reported that all the staff supported me. The report has been cc'd to amongst others Harvey BOWYER of the FCU. This is the internal audit section called the Financial Compliance Unit (FCU) I didn't know where this fitted into the investigation by Colin REYNOLDS. However a few months later a team from the FCU internal audit came to the embassy to go through all our accounts. All they found at the end of their audit was that I owed about \$20 for a lunch for which I lost the receipt, this I repaid. It appeared to me that they were plainly out to get me and I thought I had survived; the only criticism of me was the handling of the HIRST matter.

In July after Colin REYNOLDS left I then went on holiday, London then sent out Dominic SCHROEDER from the FCO political Eastern Department who came and interviewed the same staff as Colin Reynolds again after which he came up with some 18 discipline offences against me.

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In August I was called back from holiday in Canada to London to see Howard DRAKE the personnel department director. Present at this meeting were Tessa REDMAYNE of the personnel department and Kate SMITH who was my union representative. At this meeting Howard DRAKE asked me to resign and I declined this is detailed in a report he completed dated 27/8/2003 that was sent to me for 'clearance' I produce a copy as exhibit CJM/6. During this meeting I was told that if I forgot about Tashkent that I would be offered another ambassadorship, but I declined this. It was at this meeting that I first became aware of the allegations albeit Colin REYNOLDS had previously told me they were nonsense. The source of the allegations was never disclosed to me.

All the disciplinary allegations were false and around this time my security clearance was up for review. My security clearance reviewer contacted me to state my clearance had been passed by him but it had then been sent back to him and he had been put under pressure not to clear me. He said that he was sticking by his recommendation and my clearance was renewed.

I was suspended for four months and sent back to Tashkent and told not to speak to anyone about the outstanding allegations. I was banned from entering embassy buildings and the stress of it all caused my health to collapse, I suffered severe heart and lung problems as a result.

After four months of investigation I was cleared of all 18 allegations; there was a formal hearing in relation to two matters only. These related to being seen with a 'hangover' by a local member of staff in Tashkent and secondly misusing an embassy car, I was cleared on both counts and the evidence against me was shown to be rubbish or non-existent.

I was however found guilty of telling someone about the existence of the allegations when I returned to Tashkent for which I was given a final written warning in January 2004.

Later in June 2004 one of the initial telegrams I had written was somehow leaked to the Financial Times newspaper and the Times printed sections of it. This was not done by me and although I denied it I was suspended as a result and in February 2005 I resigned from the Civil Service. I was given six years early retirement severance pay.

I firmly believe that the allegations against me were knowingly false or grossly exaggerated, and were concocted against me deliberately to silence me after I was the only senior civil servant to enter a written objection to the policy of collusion in torture. As a consequence my career was destroyed and my health permanently damaged.

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