Dear Mr Wallace:

The world is in a challenging place right now, and the need for compassion and conservation has never been greater. As wildlife photographers who have spent our lives documenting the beauty and fragility of the natural world, we are acutely aware of the need to protect – not pillage – the living planet, which includes the animals we share it with. It is for this reason that we ask you to stop funding the slaughter of black bears for the Queen's Guard's caps.

PETA has informed us that making a single ceremonial hat takes the hide of one bear who was gunned down by hunters. Some of the bears shot for the caps are mothers, and their orphaned cubs are left to starve, meaning one cap can actually represent the slaughter of an entire family. We understand that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) claims that the bear fur is the by-product of a "cull" overseen by Canadian authorities – as though this would somehow make it OK – but both the federal and provincial Canadian governments say no such culls exist. Fur farming was banned in the UK more than 20 years ago, so it's unconscionable that the MoD continues to support the killing of bears for their skins overseas.

Mr Wallace, the only way bears should be shot is through a lens. And given the availability of high-quality, animal-free alternatives, there's no longer any excuse for using the fur of slaughtered wildlife. We urge you to make the switch to humane faux fur, for which no one must be killed. Please, animals' lives depend on it.

Sincerely,

Andy Parkinson, Photographer
Megan Mccubbin, Zoologist, Wildlife TV Presenter and Photographer
Aaron 'Bertie' Gekoski, Photojournalist and Filmmaker
Britta Jaschinski, Photographer and Co-Founder of Photographers against Wildlife Crime
Keith Wilson, Photo Editor, Journalist and Co-Founder of Photographers against Wildlife Crime
Craig Jones, Photographer
Danny Green, Photographer
Jo-Anne McArthur, Photographer, Founder, and President of We Animals Media
Richard Peters, Photographer
Mark Sission, Photographer