

Seeking a deeper and broader partnership between the United Nations and African Union

Thank you, Your Excellency, and my thanks also to Secretary-General Guterres and Chairperson Faki for their informative briefings as part of this important debate.

As the UK's Minister for Africa, I am keen to work closely with the African Union and this is a personal priority for me. In fact, I made the first overseas trip of any UK Minister after the first wave of the COVID-19 outbreak when I visited the AU Commissioners in July.

The UK is investing up to \$27 million in the AU COVID-19 Response Fund to tackle COVID and save lives.

In my remarks, I will focus on three key aspects of how the UN-AU partnership can bolster the UN's fundamental purpose – that is to say, to maintain international peace and security.

Firstly, the early identification of risks to regional peace and security.

Secondly, coordinated efforts to mediate and encourage peaceful resolutions to conflict.

And thirdly, coherent support to implement peace agreements, consolidate democratic governance and build peace.

Mr President, both the UN and the AU would benefit from more integrated analysis to identify the emergence or re-emergence of conflict. We should not shy away from identifying underlying drivers of instability and conflict and having honest conversations about where we must act.

The UK is proud to support the AU's Continental Early Warning System, and I look forward to visiting the Early Warning Centre on my next trip to Addis. But accurate and timely information needs to be coupled with plans for effective and early action, and that needs to happen at state, regional or continental level. AU support to elections in Madagascar, for example, two years ago and mediation in Sudan last year were impressive examples of what the AU can do. However, in other cases, action from the AU or UN has come too late or we have not acted at all. The key to greater shared success is consistency in our approach.

Mr President, this brings me to my second point. When conflicts do emerge, the UN and the AU bring complementary skills to the table.

We are all deeply concerned by the situation in Tigray, and the immediate priorities are to secure greater humanitarian access and ensure the protection of civilians and human rights.

The UK will continue to support AU-led efforts. I urge all parties to accept credible offers of support to establish the conditions for a sustainable political solution.

This brings me to my third point, Mr President. Once conflict is brought to an end, the real work of building and sustaining peace begins.

Continued partnership between the UN and the AU is vital to see through the peace agreement in the Central African Republic, brokered through their joint efforts. The next milestone is credible, inclusive and peaceful elections later this month.

Strong cooperation is particularly important during peacekeeping transitions, as the UN or AU presence reconfigures to meet evolving conditions.

I hope the AU will be able to provide their expertise and political support for the work of UNITAMS, helping Sudan's transition to democracy.

AU forces currently play an invaluable role in Somalia; I pay tribute to the brave men and women of AMISOM, the AU-led peace operation. Looking ahead, Somali Security Forces are now stronger but still need support. I will encourage greater work in that regard from the AU and the UN and others to ensure that the AU-led mission evolves in response to Somalia's increasing capabilities.

Predictable and sustainability in financing is an important element of the AU's ability to deploy operations like AMISOM. The United Kingdom supports, in principle, access to UN assessed contributions for future AU-led peace support operations, on a case-by-case basis and subject to certain key conditions.

Mr President, it is abundantly clear that a deeper and broader partnership between the UN and the AU is indispensable as we strive towards our shared goal of a conflict-free Africa. The UK remains committed to supporting that partnership.

Thank you.

COVID-19 vaccinations and care homes: programme launch

A letter from the Minister for Care to local authorities, directors of adult social services and managers of care homes for older adults.

[COVID-19 vaccinations and care homes: programme launch](#)

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[News story: Avian influenza \(bird flu\): Latest situation](#)

New housing measures will come into force in England, Scotland and Wales on 14 December.

[The Prime Minister has reappointed Marilyn Berk and Eric Ellul as Trustees of the Wallace Collection.](#)

News story

Marilyn Berk and Eric Ellul have been reappointed by the Prime Minister as Trustee of the Wallace Collection for four years from 9 January 2021 – 08 January 2025.



Marilyn Berk led an internationally renowned luxury cashmere retailing

business for over 30 years before retiring in 2014. She has extensive commercial and branding experience combining contemporary design with traditional craftsmanship having also steered the company to its digital platform. She has championed the preservation and promotion of the historic heritage of her flagship shop in the Burlington Arcade.

She was appointed a trustee of the Wallace Collection in 2016 and also sits on the audit and investment committees. She was appointed a trustee of the English National Ballet in 2020 and also sits on the development committee. She has worked with The Prince's Trust advising on their retail outlet and successfully mentored many of the Trust's young companies through the retail process. Her other voluntary commitments include chairing educational appeal panels and helping young victims through the criminal court system.

Eric Ellul is a Senior Advisor of The Boston Consulting Group, Chairman of Rede-Partners (pending FCA confirmation), Non-Executive Director of Cerba Healthcare and of MGroup Services. He was previously Senior Partner and Managing Director of The Boston Consulting Group, with successive roles as Global Head of Private Equity, member of the European Management Team, Managing Director of the London office and Chair of the Global Audit & Risk Committee. He worked in the London, Tokyo and Paris offices.

Eric has been a trustee of the Wallace Collection since January 2017. He chairs the Fundraising Committee, a sub-committee of the Collection's Board of Trustees. Key areas of focus for the committee have been to advise on building the Collection's endowment; on sponsorship opportunities for the new temporary exhibition gallery and programme; and on identifying donors to improve the presentation of the Collection. He is also a member of the Audit & Risk Committee.

Eric holds a general engineering degree from Ecole Centrale de Paris and an MBA from INSEAD. He is married to Virginie and is a father of three.

These roles are not remunerated. These reappointments have been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), the process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Marilyn Berk and Eric Ellul have not declared any activity.

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