

Guatemala invited to participate in the Global Conference for Media Freedom in London

The UK and Canadian governments are working together to defend media freedom and improve the safety of journalists who report across the world. The Global Conference for Media Freedom is part of an international campaign to shine a global spotlight on media freedom and increase the cost to those that are attempting to restrict it.

It will bring together global leaders and representatives from the media industry, journalists, civil society and academia and is supported by [Luminate](#). The Global Conference for Media Freedom in 2019 will be the first of its kind.

The conference will be structured around four themes:

- protection and prosecution, including impunity
- national frameworks and legislation
- building trust in media and countering disinformation
- media sustainability

Global leaders, representatives from the media industry, journalists, civil society and academia will gather to attend interactive panel discussions. The first day will focus on defining the challenges, the second on framing solutions.

Follow [#defendmediafreedom](#) on social media for the latest news and information.

International Development Secretary Rory Stewart visits Jordan in first foreign visit in role

On Monday (July 1 2019), the Secretary of State visited UK aid funded programmes and met with Jordan's Prime Minister Dr Omar Razzaz.

He was given a tour of one of the country's largest solar power field, Solar Power One, which is helping the country move away from dependence on expensive and polluting fossil fuels.

The visitor also spoke to families in Za'atari refugee camp who had been forced to flee their homes in Syria during the war. While there, he was shown how UK-made iris scanning technology was improving the efficiency of a cash support programme so refugees can shop for a large variety of goods, which brings a sense of normality and dignity to their life.

The Department for International Development has pledged to give £55 million to support refugees in Jordan over three years. This will provide financial assistance to 22,000 of the most vulnerable refugees caught up in the protracted crisis. The UK aid support is helping to create stability in the wider region.

During his meeting with Dr Razzaz, the International Development Secretary reaffirmed the importance of the UK-Jordan Partnership announced by Prime Minister Theresa May in November 2017. This involves the UK supporting Jordan's ambitious programme of reforms, including on its economy and energy sector.

International Development Secretary Rory Stewart said of his first overseas visit in his role:

"I can think of no better example than Jordan anywhere in the world where Britain is working so well with another country. It's the work we do with refugees that I saw in Za'atari camp. It's about helping Jordan's economy grow and young unemployed Jordanians find work. It's about helping create security and stability in one of the most fragile regions of the world.

"Then there's the work we are funding around tackling climate change, including the solar farm I saw, which is helping to drive growth in a country which is trying to move away from fossil fuels and become a world leader in green, renewable energy

"Jordan has made these impressive reforms whilst on the frontline of tackling the Syria crisis, showing immense generosity by hosting millions of Syrian refugees. We will continue to support Jordan, which remains a critical friend and important ally that is vital for regional stability.

"The British public should be proud of our partnership with Jordan. We are helping create prosperity, stability and a cleaner climate in Jordan, which will benefit the wider region, and ultimately the UK as well."

The Secretary of State's visit follows the Jordan: Growth and Prosperity Conference in London in February, which rallied the international community behind Jordan's own ambitious plans for economic growth. It also made a breadth of UK expertise available to the Government of Jordan to support their plan for wide-ranging reforms.

During his visit this week The International Development Secretary also met with Hala Zawati, Minister of Energy, and Dr Mohamad Al Ississ, Minister for Planning and International Coordination, and Minister of State for Economic Affairs.

Before arriving in Jordan he also attended the Abu Dhabi Climate Meeting.

Homes England Senior Independent Director Appointed

Homes England can confirm that Simon Dudley has been appointed Senior Independent Director by the Homes England Board today (4 July 2019).

The Non-Executive role is in addition to Mr Dudley's responsibilities as a Board member and will include acting as intermediary between the Chairman and Board members and deputising for the Chairman.

Mr Dudley will commence his new role with immediate effect, including deputising for Sir Edward Lister during his short leave of absence while he carries out specific work related to the Conservative Party leadership contest.

Home Secretary visit to Turkey

The Home Secretary met his Turkish counterpart in Ankara today (4 July 2019) to discuss joint efforts to tackle terrorism and organised immigration crime.

Sajid Javid held discussions in the Turkish capital with Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu where they both stressed the importance of UK-Turkey cooperation and agreed to strengthen collaboration in the fight against terror.

They also signed a joint Declaration of Intent which formalises the processes that are already in place with the Turkish Government to safely manage the deportation of British terrorist fighters from Turkey.

It also includes specific provisions on information sharing which will aid investigations into these individuals upon their return.

During the visit, Mr Javid and his Turkish counterpart also discussed the importance of tackling anti-Muslim hatred, anti-Semitism and Christian persecution.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Turkey is a vital partner to the UK in our combined efforts to tackle the global threat we face from terrorism.

The joint Declaration of Intent, formalising our existing processes of information sharing and managing the safe deportation of British terrorist fighters from Turkey, is testament to that close collaboration.

As Home Secretary, I'm committed to continuing to work closely with our friends in Turkey to counter the terrorist threat.

Charity Commission publishes its 2018 to 2019 annual report and accounts

We have today published our [annual report and accounts for 2018-19](#). The report sets out our key activities, successes and challenges over the year, and highlights increases in demand on our core regulatory functions.

This has been the Commission's busiest year to date – largely accounted for through a 50% increase in reports by charities of serious incidents, concerns raised by whistleblowers and auditors, and a significant increase in the use of our legal powers.

The report also sets out the ways in which our work is changing to ensure charity delivers maximum benefit to society whilst upholding the special status charity has in the eyes of the public. It presents the key aims of our business plan, from which we began working formally from 1 April 2019.

Helen Stephenson, CEO and Accounting Officer for the Charity Commission, said:

Public expectations of charity, and the role of charity in our society, are changing, and it is vital that charities change with it. As the regulator, we exist to serve the public interest, and are committed to ensuring everything we do helps charity thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society. This year we have started to deliver on our ambitious new strategy under challenging circumstances, which include the growing demand on our core functions, making this the busiest year for us. My priorities in the coming months will be to ensure we are customer-focused in all that we do and that we are giving trustees the tools they need to succeed in an ever-changing world. It is also to ensure we are properly resourced, so that our expert staff can make the significant progress outlined in our new strategy at

the pace we believe is required.