

Press release: Communities Secretary praises Holocaust survivors on visit to survivors centre in Hendon

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Survivors of the Holocaust were today praised for their fortitude and "great service" to Britain by Communities Secretary, the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, as he stressed the importance of plans for a new national memorial.

On a visit to Jewish Care's Holocaust Survivors' Centre in Hendon, Mr Brokenshire said the memorial will ensure we never forget one of the darkest chapters in human history.

He also announced that a time capsule will be buried at the proposed site and invited survivors and others to think about what should go in the capsule alongside their hopes for the memorial.

Mr Brokenshire met and spoke to survivors about the challenges they faced as refugees in Britain after the war, how they went on to build new lives for themselves and became part of the essential fabric of British life.

It was also an opportunity to discuss the importance of the new National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre planned for Victoria Tower Gardens beside Parliament, as a significant proportion of the centre's content will be devoted to survivors' testimony.

Speaking after the visit to the weekly 'Yiddish and Kiddush' social club held at the Hendon centre, Mr Brokenshire said:

For more than 70 years the survivors who built a community here in Hendon have done Britain and the world a great service.

Through their powerful testimony, in the retelling of difficult, personal, tragic stories we've learnt the terrible consequences of

where bigotry, intolerance and division can lead.

The striking National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre is a powerful symbol of our commitment to remembering the men, women and children who were murdered in the Holocaust but also those who survived and made their lives in this country.

Rightly located in the shadow of Parliament, it will be the focal point for national remembrance of the Holocaust. The view of Parliament from the Memorial will provide a constant reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences.

The Holocaust remains the worst example of the disintegration of democratic values and remains unsurpassed in its horror.

A time capsule will be buried at the site. In a century's time, those opening it will be reminded that survivors fought long and hard for this memorial.

As these first-person testimonies fade with time, the Memorial and Learning Centre will make sure Britain will never forget.

Jewish Care's [Holocaust Survivors' Centre](#) is the only centre in the UK designed and run specifically for Holocaust survivors. It provides outings, lunches, music concerts, talks on art and culture and therapeutic events 6 days a week.

The Centre also records testimonies and links survivors to schools so that they can share their experiences with future generations as well as arranges Holocaust education trips to Poland.

The [United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial](#) is dedicated to the 6 million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust and all other victims of the Nazis and their collaborators.

It will honour and remember all victims and survivors of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides and educate future generations on the importance of fighting prejudice and persecution in all its forms.

The proposals have been developed with great sensitivity to the existing context and character of Victoria Tower Gardens. The vast majority of the park's green space will be retained and enhanced and views over Parliament and the river Thames will be improved with a range of accessible seating and a new boardwalk along the embankment.

Speech: The Time to Act is Now

Statement by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon at UN General Assembly Climate and Sustainable Development for All Summit

Speech: The Time to Act is Now

Madam President, thank you for convening this important High-Level meeting.

Last year's IPCC report set out the facts simply in black and white: whichever way you look at it – from the economic, the environmental, or the moral standpoint- we have reached a critical moment for our collective climate ambition. There is absolutely no time to waste.

For too many people, it is already a matter of life and death. Millions around the world have been left without homes or livelihoods as we've seen recently in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi following Cyclone Idai. Thousands in the Caribbean, as I have seen directly myself having visited the region, are still rebuilding their lives more than two years – yes that's two years – after Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit.

We all know that the impacts of climate change. The impacts are such that will cause more hardship, they will cause instability and they will cause conflict in the future. The most vulnerable will be hit first and hardest, but let us be clear, your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, none of us are safe. All of us will be impacted and affected in one way or another.

That is why the UK fully supports the efforts of the President of the General Assembly and Secretary General Guterres to refocus the United Nations on climate change and, importantly, the urgent need for action. We must work together, we must pool our resources and draw on the best of human ingenuity to tackle this incredible challenge. That means arresting climate change where we can; it means adapting to changes that are already taking place.

The Secretary General's Climate Action Summit in September, as we all I'm sure acknowledge, will be a critical moment. If we are to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, climate action must be at the heart of our approach. And we must urgently increase our collective ambition – to reduce emissions, mobilise finance and build resilience.

Let me share with you what the United Kingdom is doing on all three.

Firstly, we have ourselves cut our emissions by 42% since 1990 but importantly, this is whilst growing our GDP by 72%.

Secondly, we are one of the world's leading providers of climate finance, having committed more than \$7.5 billion between 2016 and 2020 in support of both mitigation and adaptation. And at the Secretary General's Climate Summit later this year we will be co-leading the resilience and adaptation strand with Egypt, in direct partnership with Bangladesh, the Netherlands, and Malawi. Investing in resilience not only reduces risks to lives and livelihoods, it also offers a great opportunity – an opportunity to create jobs, spread prosperity, accelerate development and enhance security. At the Summit we will bring government, businesses and civil society together – together to drive a transformational change in the way we think, act and take investment decisions. We want climate risk to be at the heart of all our decision-making. And we want the Climate Action Summit to be – not an end in itself – but a catalyst for a new era of increased ambition.

Finally, Madam President, the United Kingdom has offered to host COP26 in 2020. If our bid is successful, let me assure you, let me assure all of you that we will bring to bear the full weight of our expertise, the full weight of our influence and our ambition together. We will bring civil society, the private sector governments and every expert on the planet together to encourage a spirit of shared enterprise; and we will set challenging goals that reflect the different global priorities.

Madam President, the greatest threat we face today is not climate change itself. It is inaction in the face of that threat. The time for delay is in the past. If not now, then when? If not us, then who? It is time for action. So together, let's take action now on climate change. Together let us build that future which will make our future generations proud of what we do today.

Thank you.

Press release: Defence Minister and industry leaders commit to closer collaboration

The companies and the Minister signed a joint document, named 'Vision 2025', which includes new pledges from both parties to improve the productivity of the UK defence sector and ensure the armed forces obtain the capabilities they need in the future.

After welcoming remarks from the Defence Minister and Charles Woodburn, Chief Executive of BAE Systems, attendees took part in sessions focused on boosting defence exports, encouraging innovation within the defence industry and accelerating the inclusion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the market.

The Defence Minister also unveiled the MOD's [SME Action Plan](#) at the event, setting out the department's commitment to supporting smaller businesses across the defence supply chain. Developed with input from businesses, industry bodies and Trade Associations, the SME Action Plan includes a range of measures to increase the MOD's procurement spend with SMEs by removing barriers to entry to the defence market. The Plan sets an ambitious target to spend 25% of the MOD's total procurement budget with SMEs by 2022.

Speaking at the Defence Suppliers Forum, Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

Vision 2025 represents a significant evolution in government-industry collaboration. By committing to work together more closely, we will ensure our armed forces continue to benefit from world-leading capabilities while driving up value-for-money for UK taxpayers.

Small and medium-sized businesses will play a crucial role in delivering our future military capability, so I am delighted to endorse the publication of our SME Action Plan today. Engaging with smaller and innovative suppliers will help create a more resilient supply chain while boosting local economies and creating jobs.

Charles Woodburn, Chief Executive, BAE Systems, said:

The UK Defence Sector has a long history of successful collaborative working with customers and partners.

Vision 2025 will help ensure that we remain best placed to design, deliver and maintain the world class defence capabilities that the Armed Forces need and deserve.

The defence industry in the UK supports 260,000 jobs and contributed £9bn in exports in 2017. The MOD invested £18.9bn with UK industry in 2017/18, equating to £290 per resident.