

Press release: Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field meets with Pacific Island leaders at UN General Assembly

The Minister said:

This event was an excellent and welcome opportunity to deepen our already strong collaboration with Pacific Island partners. The UK is doubling our diplomatic presence in the Pacific through the opening of High Commissions in Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, underlining our deep commitment to the region.

With Pacific leaders today, I discussed work to strengthen climate resilience. This is an immediate priority for the Pacific, but is not just a Pacific issue – it is a global issue, which requires a global response. The UK is at the forefront of this, helping to secure a long-term sustainable future for the region. We talked about clean oceans, where the UK is a committed co-Chair – with Vanuatu – of the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance.

We also discussed the UK's determination to boost trade with the Pacific nations, in order to support the creation of sustainable economies, based not on aid or loans but on investment and exports.

Finally, I underlined our commitment to helping Pacific nations achieve their international objectives through successful engagement in multilateral fora, including the UN.

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Published 25 September 2018

Speech: PM speech about girls' education at UNGA: 25 September 2018

I would first like to thank President Macron and Prime Minister Trudeau – and thank you also to the governments of Kenya, Niger and Jordan as co-hosts of this event with whom we are working to support girls' education around the world.

Today over 130 million girls did not go to school. 130 million girls – most of them in the world's poorer countries – did not have the opportunity to learn and develop the skills that most of us in this room take for granted. 130 million girls did not receive an education, without which their unique and almost unlimited potential will never be unlocked.

By denying girls an education we deny them a voice, we deny them choice, we deny them their future.

Now I know I am extraordinarily grateful for the choices the education I had gave me. Growing up I was blessed with good schools, a supportive learning environment, encouragement from my teachers and my parents. I have always said: "Education is the key that unlocks the door to your future." And I want all girls around the world to be able to unlock that door.

Over the next decade, millions of young girls will enter the jobs market. As they do so, they have the potential not just to lift themselves, their families and their countries out of poverty, but also to grow the global economy, create new markets and find solutions to shared challenges that we all face. Yet without education, that incredible potential will not be realised – and all our futures will be all the poorer for it.

So Improving access to education is not only the right thing to do, it is also at the heart of the UK's drive to boost economic growth, improve stability and reduce conflict around the world. A more educated world is a better world for all of us, and the UK has long led the way in making it easier for girls around the globe to access 12 years of quality education.

Since 2015 we have helped at least 5.6 million girls in developing countries gain a decent education, and this commitment will continue. Earlier this year, I pledged almost £400 million of UK Aid for the second phase of our Girls' Education Challenge. This is a programme that is already supporting 1 million girls around the world to continue their education through primary, secondary school and training. And it is also giving girls who have dropped out or never attended school due to poverty, motherhood, disability or conflict a chance to learn through catch-up classes and vital skills training.

And phase two of the Challenge will see new projects that specifically target the most vulnerable and marginalised girls, including those with disabilities. And I am pleased to announce today nine such projects, which

will support more than 170,000 of the world's most marginalised girls. This includes in Ethiopia, where we will fund counselling and mentoring to help girls enrol and stay in school, and teacher training to help improve the quality of education. And that project will help over 70,000 girls access education, including up to 3,500 girls with disabilities.

And elsewhere, we will be funding projects that help girls affected by war – who are more than twice as likely to be out of school compared to those not living in conflict zones.

And while our work is making an immeasurable difference to the lives of those it helps, to make sure no girls are left behind requires truly global co-ordinated action. Nations, donors, multilaterals and other organisations working together to secure real and lasting change.

So we have launched a global campaign and are pushing for commitments to girls' education from governments around the world. And we received many such commitments at April's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, at which leaders pledged to ensure girls across the Commonwealth will be able to access 12 years of quality education and learning by 2030.

And, today, I am calling on everyone here to join our campaign. To commit to the individual, collective and governmental action that is needed to break down barriers to girls' education. To increase girls' access to schools and learning. to ensure that every girl, in every corner of the world, can access the 12 years of education they need to unleash their potential, embrace the opportunities before them, and help change the world for the better.

[News story: UK agrees principles for tackling modern slavery in supply chains](#)

The entrapment of people in forced labour is estimated to affect 25 million people worldwide. As part of a new effort to tackle these crimes the UK has developed, alongside the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, a set of principles for nations to adopt in order to tackle modern slavery in global supply chains. By working together, the UK and its partners can use their \$600 billion of purchasing power as a lever to prevent forced labour in both the public and private sector.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins, added:

Denying people their freedom and fundamental human rights through modern slavery is a global tragedy. We as governments, businesses

and citizens must do all we can to stop it.

The UK and our partners are going further, showing leadership and setting out these new principles designed to drive out slavery from the supply chains of the goods and services we all use.

The principles follow the success of the Prime Minister's global call to action launched at the UN General Assembly last year, which now has over 80 endorsements.

In the UK alone it is estimated that modern slavery costs up to £4.3 billion a year. The UK introduced the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, the first of its kind in the world, which helped transform the UK's response to modern slavery on a national and international scale by providing police and law enforcement agencies with the powers they need to bring perpetrators to justice. It was announced in July 2018 that the government has commissioned an independent review of the act to ensure this legislation remains world leading as this crime evolves.

Announced at the UN General Assembly, the UK is encouraging other countries to adopt the 4 key principles.

Governments should take steps to prevent and address human trafficking in government procurement practices

- analyse, develop and implement measures to identify, prevent and reduce the risk of human trafficking in government procurement supply chains
- provide tools and incentives and adopt risk assessment policies and procedures that require their procurement officers and contractors to assess the nature and extent of potential exposure to human trafficking in their supply chains
- take targeted action, including adopting appropriate due diligence processes, to identify, prevent, mitigate, remedy, and account on how they address human trafficking

Governments should encourage the private sector to prevent and address human trafficking in its supply chains

- work in partnership with business, workers and survivors to set clear expectations for private sector entities on their responsibility to conduct appropriate due diligence in their supply chains to identify, prevent and mitigate human trafficking
- provide tools and incentives to the private sector to encourage meaningful action and public reporting of their efforts, including through programmes policies or legislation

Governments should advance responsible recruitment policies and practices

- advance responsible recruitment practices, including by implementing policies that incentivise and support responsible practice, and by

support initiatives such as the 'Employer Pays Principle'

- contribute to the growing knowledge base of promising practices for protecting workers from fraud and exploitation in the recruitment process

Governments should strive for harmonisation

- make reasonable efforts to share information and work with other committed governments to align existing and proposed laws, regulations and policies to combat human trafficking in global supply chains

Press release: Foreign Secretary meets Iranian Minister Zarif and demands progress on dual-national consular cases

Mr Hunt discussed a range of issues relating to the bilateral relationship, particularly the ongoing cases of a number of detained British-Iranian dual nationals.

Following his meeting with Foreign Minister Zarif, Mr Hunt said:

I today made clear to my Iranian counterpart that it is absolutely essential that the Iranian government takes rapid action in relation to the cases of a number of detained dual nationals, including Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

I again pressed for Nazanin's swift release – she deserves to be back at home with her family.

Yesterday (Monday 24 September), in a separate meeting of foreign ministers of the UK, Germany, France, Russia, China, Iran, and the EU High Representative, Mr Hunt urged Iran to continue to comply with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and expressed the UK's firm commitment to the deal.

Following his discussions on the Iran nuclear deal, the Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

The UK remains committed to the Iran nuclear deal, which is critical for global security. We will continue to ensure the deal is upheld, and Iran must do the same.

The Foreign Secretary also took the opportunity to offer his personal condolences for the terrorist attack in Ahvaz over the weekend, which he condemned unreservedly.