

Press release: PM meeting with Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-Cha of Thailand: 20 June 2018

The Prime Minister hosted Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-Cha of Thailand for talks at Downing Street earlier today.

They welcomed the long history of friendship between the UK and Thailand, agreeing on the importance of reinvigorating our strategic partnership on issues of mutual interest, such as trade and security.

On trade, they agreed that as the UK leaves the EU our bilateral trade and investment relationship would continue to go from strength to strength. The PM welcomed the work of the UK-Thai Business Leadership Council in identifying areas where bilateral trade could be further liberalised.

They discussed the importance of continuing to cooperate on a range of shared international security challenges, including how we can work together to tackle the scourge of modern slavery, and how to strengthen the ability of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to attribute chemical weapons attacks. They also discussed the importance of the international community continuing to come together to counter violent extremism and enhance cyber security, and to take forward efforts to tackle the illegal wildlife trade.

The Prime Minister urged continued progress towards free and open elections in Thailand in line with international standards, including restrictions on political parties being lifted at an early stage.

Speech: ICC's Role to Achieve Justice for Victims in Darfur

Thank you Mr President.

I would like to thank the Prosecutor for her 27th report on the situation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 1593 (2005), and for her briefing today. I would also like to commend her and her staff for their hard work and their dedication to these investigations.

The ICC has an important role to play in global efforts to end impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern and the United Kingdom fully supports its efforts to hold perpetrators to account and achieve justice for

victims. We understand how difficult these investigations are proving to be for the prosecutor and her team and how disheartening that can be, but we encourage them to maintain their current level of commitment, as the victims and witnesses deserve nothing less.

Whilst the UK welcomes reductions in armed conflict between government forces and the armed opposition, we are concerned by the ongoing clashes between the Sudan Liberation Army – Abdel Wahid (SLA-AW) and government forces in the Jebel Marra region. Reports of villages being burnt, aerial bombardments, civilian casualties and displacements are particularly troubling. It is unacceptable that the Government of Sudan has prevented UNAMID and humanitarian actors from accessing areas of recent conflict, and we call on the Government to provide unfettered access immediately.

As the security situation shows signs of improvements in some parts of Darfur, small numbers of internally displaced persons are beginning to return to their area of origin. However many of these returns are short-lived and precarious due to localised insecurity, the occupation of lands by militias and the absence of basic services, and we note that the Prosecutor's office is highly concerned for the fate of some of these IDPs. We are also concerned that the situation is particularly perilous for female IDPs given the ongoing prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence. The Government of Sudan, with the support of UNAMID and international donors, must focus its efforts on creating the conditions necessary for the safe and voluntary return of all IDPs, in accordance with applicable international law, as required by Security Council resolution 2363 (2017).

The continued lack of progress in the peace process is a cause for significant frustration. We urge all parties to engage meaningfully and to focus their efforts on implementing the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) Roadmap. Linked to this, the Government must ensure the protection of fundamental human rights, including freedom of expression and freedom of association, in order to create an environment conducive to political dialogue and democratic reform.

Mr President,

In adopting UN Security Council resolution 1593, this Council committed to support the Office of the Prosecutor in its efforts to investigate the situation in Darfur. We must therefore act upon the Prosecutor's request to the Council to take effective measures to enable the Court to carry out its mandate in Darfur, in particular asserting the need for all States to cooperate with the Office's investigations. In this regard, the United Kingdom looks forward to the Arria-formula meeting on UN Security Council-ICC relations on 6 July initiated by The Netherlands and co-sponsored by the UK and others. We encourage our fellow Member States to engage constructively with this meeting and to consider carefully what more we, as a Council, can do to ensure that the Court receives the necessary support. The United Kingdom joins those States which believe that the Council should consider steps that it might take to address non-compliance findings by the Court when these are referred to the Council by the Court's judges.

In this connection, the UK again calls on the Government of Sudan to fulfil its legal obligations pursuant to resolution 1593, to cooperate fully with the Court, and to arrest and surrender the suspects to it without further delay.

Mr President,

The United Kingdom continues to be frustrated that fugitives of the Court, including President Al-Bashir, Mr Harun and Mr Hussein, are still travelling to certain countries unhindered. For our part, the United Kingdom will continue to raise our concerns with the relevant governments, including through the European Union. We renew our call to all States Parties to cooperate with the ICC and abide by their obligations under the Rome Statute. We also urge them to consult the Court if they feel that they are unable to co-operate with it for any reason.

Finally Mr President,

We again thank the Office of the Prosecutor for its continued commitment to pursuing these investigations and achieving justice for victims in Darfur, despite the fragile security situation, access restrictions and lack of cooperation. We urge them to continue with this important work.

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[Speech: ICC's Role to Achieve Justice for Victims in Darfur](#)

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[Speech: Greg Hands: the best and most sustainable way out of poverty is through trade](#)

We're at the cusp of an historic opportunity – and an historic challenge.

According to the World Bank, the last 3 decades have seen the greatest fall in material deprivation in human history.

China is now the world's second-largest economy – unimaginable 40 years ago.

But there are still enormous challenges to overcome.

Rapid growth cloaks deep deprivation – for the poor, for rural areas, for women, or for minorities.

We have a duty to help ease that poverty. And the best and most sustainable way out of poverty is through trade.

Trade has built unparalleled prosperity. It propelled Britain from poverty in the early-19th century. It is propelling China now. And it will propel the developing world and the world's poor in the decades to come.

It would be wrong for us to pull up the ladder. The government wants to make sure the benefits of trade are felt by the world's poorest, and we're acting right now to make that happen.

On tariffs, the government has committed to providing, as a minimum, the same level of access for developing countries as the EU, and we're putting

legislation through Parliament to let us do that.

That is a minimum – we'll also look at ways to improve on the EU's system, by making ours more generous and easy to use.

On trade support, we're beefing up our emerging market capacity and expertise.

The Department for International Trade now has advisers in 108 countries across the world, including many emerging markets.

I'd like to welcome our recent appointment of the first Trade Commissioner for Africa – Emma Wade-Smith, someone with over 20 years' experience in trade and diplomacy.

Our £50 billion export financing capacity can now help British businesses trade in over 60 currencies – so those in emerging markets can buy British, but pay local.

And – the reason we're here today – the Prosperity Fund is a key tool in our armoury.

£1.2 billion, to deliver everything from training government finance officers in Indonesia, to widening access to financial services in Mexico.

From improving public health provision in Brazil to building low carbon economies in South-east Asia. And this could create opportunities for you, too.

Fund programmes are designed to answer stubborn development problems and create business opportunities – growing sectors where the UK has a comparative advantage, removing trade barriers, standardising regulations and improving the legal and business environment.

For example, healthcare is a vital component to any country's development. Healthy populations live longer and are more productive.

Well, we have world-beating life sciences and pharmaceutical industries, anchored by the NHS and built on our science base – Britain has 4 of the world's top ten universities, one less than the US.

And no economy can sustain growth without the right infrastructure. The UN estimates that three fifths of the world's population will live in cities by 2030. Energy, transport, water and communications are vital for private sector investment to stimulate growth.

Yet a great deal of the infrastructure developing countries will need in 20 years has not yet been built.

This is an opportunity for our world-leading architects, urban planners, construction contractors and energy specialists.

And this applies more broadly – we have a stake in helping emerging countries

grow.

Better-run economies have better-run companies, and well-functioning legal systems. Well, British lawyers, accountants and consultants have a worldwide reputation.

Faster-growing economies need finance to fuel that growth – the City of London is ranked as the world's leading financial centre, speaking the global language of business, in the world's most convenient timezone – particularly for Africa and the Middle East.

Larger economies trade more, in absolute terms – and we're the world's fifth-largest exporter.

And as economies develop they spend more on services – we're the second-largest services exporter.

Better-run economies benefit everyone – more trade for us, more business for you, and a route out of poverty for hundreds of millions overseas.

And the biggest benefits come from freer economies and freer trade.

There is no reason why the plunge in poverty we've seen in recent decades should be a one-off – that's not something we have to accept.

It is by people's own innovation and endeavour that developing countries can be lifted out of poverty.

Free trade means nothing more than letting that endeavour run free.

[Speech: Minister Mark Field speech at the Prosperity Fund Business Forum](#)

Introduction

All over the world we see evidence of the virtuous circle stimulated by rising prosperity.

It has the power to build an environment that's more conducive to trade, creating the jobs that enable people to work, do business and fulfil their potential – helping communities and countries move into a future free from a dependence on aid.

Prosperity Fund and Global Britain

This is the logic that underpins the UK Government's Prosperity Fund: £1.2 billion of our aid budget ring-fenced to promote inclusive economic growth

needed to reduce poverty in middle income countries.

You may be wondering 'why middle income countries?'

Of course the answer is that we continue to support the world's poorest countries too, through our aid programmes.

But we know that 70% of the world's poorest people live in middle income countries, and this is where we think the greatest potential benefits could be derived from supporting and promoting the transformative power of trade.

What we also know from 5,000 years of trading experience is that open markets, and free and fair trade are a win-win for companies and countries on both sides of the deal.

As Minister for Asia and the Pacific, and as the constituency MP for the city of London, I certainly have a huge personal interest in seeing British businesses thriving in developing markets.

These are the markets that will grow most dynamically in the coming years. And I have seen, during my working visits, the important role being played by the Prosperity Fund in rolling the pitch for British business success.

These twin objectives – supporting middle income countries' aspirations for trade, investment, jobs and growth – while also helping international, including British business to benefit from the fruit of that trade – are key elements of our vision for Global Britain.

A vision of a country that is outward-looking, confident and making a positive difference to lives right across the world.

In practical terms, rolling the pitch for business means helping to remove barriers to trade, promote business environments more conducive to investment, and facilitate export and development finance.

Prosperity Fund Examples

The impact of our support is being felt far and wide, and it is already delivering opportunities for British companies.

On my patch, in Asia, we are working with the UN Development Programme to promote fairer, more transparent and more predictable business environments in the dynamic, emerging ASEAN economies.

In Colombia our Prosperity Fund work led to a British sustainable construction firm sealing a £3.5 million deal and opening a new office as their regional hub.

Working with China, the Prosperity Fund is being used to help promote more sustainable investment in infrastructure projects that meet international standards, in ODA-eligible countries that are part of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Thanks to the Prosperity Fund, these infrastructure projects have already delivered UK commercial wins worth over £48 million; and have created a pipeline of further work, potentially worth up to £1.6 billion for the UK.

In South Africa, our Future Cities programme team is helping city authorities in Cape Town to make better use of 'Big Data' to improve the city's response to its ongoing water crisis.

This, along with further projects that the Programme is scoping – related to transport, urban planning, and sustainable development – should result in significant commercial opportunities for UK companies.

These examples show how the Prosperity Fund is already achieving its twin aim of reducing poverty and delivering business opportunities for international and UK companies.

Infrastructure programme

These opportunities are about to expand into the field of infrastructure.

I'm delighted that we are launching our Global Infrastructure Programme today.

This programme recognises the colossal infrastructure gap that has opened up, particularly in Asia and Africa, between current capacity and future need.

The programme aims to help bridge that gap by enhancing the capacity of middle income countries to develop major infrastructure projects.

We are confident that the training provided by the programme – in project planning, preparation and delivery – will achieve this aim.

We are equally confident that it will also unlock business opportunities for our experts and companies in sectors in which this country excels, including project management, sustainable infrastructure development, and financial and professional services.

Conclusion

My final point is that these opportunities can only be fully realised with help from the private sector.

To ensure that we all get the most from the Prosperity Fund we want to work with you: our businesses and our experts.

I urge you to use your time here today to consider what you can offer to our Prosperity Fund agenda, and what it can offer to you and your business.

Tell us about the barriers to trade that we should focus our resources on dismantling.

Wire your business into our network of embassies with Prosperity Fund projects, so that you can take advantage of the doors it is opening.

Together, through open markets and free and fair trade, we can strengthen the global economy for the benefit of all – that is what the Prosperity Fund is all about.

Further information