

Speech: “We will not cease in our efforts to stop the use of chemical weapons”

Thank you Mr President.

Last month I was disappointed that a simple technical rollover of the JIM mandate was blocked by Russia. Yesterday I was deeply disappointed that, even after extensive efforts to reach an agreement, a further reasonable attempt to renew the mandate was again vetoed by Russia. That veto seriously damaged my hope that those using chemical weapons in Syria would be identified and held to account.

But now I am frankly astounded that Russia has rebuffed Japan’s perfectly sensible proposal to ask the Secretary General and the Director General of the OPCW to consider the structure and methodology of the JIM. This third veto in a month clearly exposes, if it wasn’t already obvious, Russia’s determination to protect their Syrian ally, whatever the harm that causes to the ban on the use of chemical weapons, to the wider international system of rules, to Russia’s own reputation.

This council set up the JIM unanimously, as the most appropriate mechanism to investigate allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria. And since its inception it has had many successes. Its experienced and expert staff have demonstrated complete impartiality. Its investigations have been professional, thorough, rigorous. It has concluded that the Syrian regime is responsible for blatant, repeated use of chemical weapons against its own people, in an increasingly reckless and deadly manner. It has also found that Daesh is responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The failure to renew the JIM is a failure to uncover the truth behind the conduct of all actors who use chemical weapons in Syria.

As I said yesterday, those of us who are committed to upholding the international system will not cease in our efforts to stop the use of chemical weapons, and to identify and hold to account those who use these vile weapons. We will keep going. Not only to bring justice to those who have suffered from the use of these despicable weapons but also to deter those who might think of doing so in future.

Notice: National Trust (Renewable

[Energy\) Limited: application made to abstract water and impound water NPS/WR/024482 and NPS/WR/026395](#)

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

[Press release: UK stands by Caribbean and Overseas Territories](#)

On her first overseas visit International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has reaffirmed that the UK stands by those Overseas Territories and independent Commonwealth Caribbean countries devastated by the recent hurricanes and seen how British aid is helping to rebuild people's lives.

The International Development Secretary accompanied His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales during a visit to the British Virgin Islands and Dominica, where she thanked British humanitarian heroes and the military for working tirelessly on the relief efforts on the worst-hit islands. She also visited Antigua and Barbuda.

The Secretary of State set out a new £15 million package for Dominica (£12m) and Antigua and Barbuda (£3m) to help recovery and long-term reconstruction on the islands. This is in addition to a further £15m recently allocated to the affected Overseas Territories.

Speaking during the visit, Ms Mordaunt, said:

We can be proud that in their time of crisis the UK stepped up to provide the vital immediate relief that was fundamental in getting these islands back on their feet.

The UK aid mission was huge, covering small islands stretching more than 1,000 miles apart, where buildings, airports and infrastructure had been razed to the ground. I want to pay tribute

to the governments of the Overseas Territories, our humanitarian staff and to the military effort, which has been absolutely essential in delivering relief.

Now as we move on from the immediate response phase, on to the long-term future of the islands, Britain will continue to stand by people whose lives were devastated. We are also talking to the international private sector who can support the reconstruction efforts to make sure the islands can build back, and better.

The support package, which brings the total UK contribution to £92m, will include £10m to help Dominica to rebuild critical infrastructure damaged during the hurricanes. In Dominica 97% of the water system was destroyed. This is one example of where UK funding could help rebuild so Dominica is better able to withstand future natural disasters.

The UK contribution to Dominica also includes an additional £2m for early recovery, building on the £5m committed in September, which will support:

- Repairs to homes and roofs, through the International Organization for Migration, to provide hundreds of households with urgent shelter;
- Debris clearance through the UN Development Programme and the National Employment Programme to help establish healthy and safe living conditions in communities, to enable agricultural land to be put to use once again, and to support restoration of economic activity and livelihoods;
- Cash assistance through the World Food Programme, helping those worst affected to meet their needs flexibly and to revitalise the local economy.

For Antigua and Barbuda, the UK stands ready to assist with a £3m fund which will be deployed once the priorities for reconstruction on Barbuda are agreed with the local government.

For the Overseas Territories of Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Turks and Caicos, the £15m being announced today is delivering accelerated power reconnection and support to prisons, repairs to air and sea ports and support for policing. This is short-term funding to aid the territories' early steps to recovery.

The UK Government continues to work with the governments of the Overseas Territories as they develop their longer-term recovery plans.

At the World Bank meetings last month the UK announced a private sector task force will mobilise business to play a prominent role in the reconstruction in the Overseas Territories. The task force will identify and drive forward practical ways of increasing flows of private sector financial support to reconstruction in the region.

Notes to editors:

- The International Development Secretary will arrive into Antigua on Friday 17 November where she will visit the shelters where people evacuated from Barbuda are staying. The next day she will travel to the British Virgin Islands where she will meet volunteers for the Red Cross who played a huge role in rescues and aid distribution. That evening she will attend a reception where she will thank the military who have helped restore critical infrastructure on the islands, including power and water plants. On Sunday she will travel to Dominica to see the impact of the UK's response. She will meet farmers to discuss efforts to rebuild the island's agriculture and will travel to Pointe Michel, to meet residents and see the destruction Hurricane Maria caused. She will also have a chance to thank the humanitarian staff who have been coordinating the UK's response.
- Hurricane Irma (category 5) hit the British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos and Antigua and Barbuda at the beginning of September. It was closely followed by Hurricane Maria which affected Dominica, leaving 98% of buildings damaged and thousands without power. It was the first category five hurricane to hit the island in living memory, affecting almost the entire 70,000 population.
- The support announced is on top of £62m the government has committed so far to the hurricane response. The UK is also matching public donations to the British Red Cross Appeal up to £3m.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary in Ireland for high-level talks](#)

The Foreign Secretary met his Irish counterpart for talks today during an official visit to Ireland.

Boris Johnson and Simon Coveney discussed the strong, unique and enduring relationship between the UK and Ireland, as well as key foreign policy issues such as Africa and the Middle East, and the protection of human rights.

The Ministers also discussed the UK's exit from the European Union, and our aims for the future relationship.

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

There are no closer friends than the UK and Ireland. Our two nations share a special, unique and enduring bond, which will not change when the UK leaves the European Union.

I am proud to have visited Dublin today to play my part, as the British Foreign Secretary, in that bond, celebrating the contribution British and Irish people make to each other's nations.

The Foreign Secretary also met Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin TD, and visited the National Gallery of Ireland where he saw the Sir William Orpen exhibition of First World War paintings.

The final stop on the visit was to Dublin's Trinity College, where the Foreign Secretary attended an event at the Science Gallery showcasing Science Week. He met members of the Irish science and innovation community and young scientists. The Foreign Secretary heard about the deep ties and collaboration between Irish and British academics and scientific institutions.

Further information

[News story: New Defence Secretary recognises Scots defence role](#)

Gavin Williamson heard how Scots personnel and units support UK and allied operations in Iraq, South Sudan, Cyprus and the Gulf, contribute to the UK counter terrorism effort, and stand by to assist the Scottish Government and local authorities during civil emergencies, such as flooding.

Williamson met with Scotland's three most senior military officers – the Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland Rear Admiral John Weale; General Officer Scotland, Major General Bob Bruce; Air Officer Scotland, Air Vice-Marshal Ross Paterson – during a visit to Dreghorn Barracks, Edinburgh.

The Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said:

Scotland's military personnel and industrial base play a crucial role in keeping all of the people of the United Kingdom safe.

By 2020 Scotland will be home to the entire Submarine Service, an Army Infantry Brigade, the RAF's Quick Reaction Alert interceptors and submarine hunting Maritime Patrol Aircraft. Scotland is also the ideal base for crucial Defence operations and UK and Allied training requirements.

The MOD has around 10,000 sailors, soldiers and air personnel living permanently in Scotland, supported by 8,000 reservists and civilians.

Scottish industry benefits from Defence spending £1.5bn with it each year,

supporting 9,750 private sector jobs in Scotland.

The Defence Board confirmed in February 2017, that £1.7 billion would be invested to upgrade Scottish military bases over the next decade.