

Speech: “There’s an unprecedented demand for multilateral responses to global challenges – and the international system must evolve to keep up.”

Well thank you very much Mr. President, thank you Secretary-General, thank you Deputy Secretary-General for your initiative, for your report, and for your presentation this morning.

Look, we’re here for a simple reason. Extreme poverty, and conflict, and humanitarian crises are completely interlinked. More so than ever before. And in combination, this means that more people than at any point in human history need the UN development system. We’re failing too many of them. We need to do better. The good news is that we can do better. And we need to reform the UN and we need to do it now.

I think we all want an effective, rules-based international system. In the UK view, a reformed United Nations must be at the heart of that international system to prevent and resolve conflict, to help countries develop sustainably, to respond to humanitarian crises, and to build and sustain peace. In short, we want the UN to live up to its full potential.

There’s an unprecedented demand for multilateral responses to global challenges – and the international system must evolve to keep up. And that is why your strong vision, Secretary-General, for reform is so welcome. And it’s why this report is such a welcome step in the right direction.

Millions of people are currently relying on a development system whose processes and whose institutions were set up over half a century ago. Since then, more and more structures have been added, and a fair bit of red tape with them.

It is our duty now to refocus, reorganise, and renew.

And like other speakers, I want to thank you personally Secretary-General and you Deputy Secretary-General for driving forward this agenda personally. You have our appreciation. You have our full support and I hope that together we can move forward with the reform that the UN development system so much needs.

And I’m sure I speak for almost everyone in the room in saying that we want to be part of creating that future for this great organisation. That’s why we are so pleased that there has been so much consultation with Member States so far and we look forward to further consultation between now and December. But we have entrusted the leadership of this great organisation to you, and it is

right that you use your authority to steer the reform that you judge the organisation needs.

I won't respond right now to the specifics in the report. Let me simply say that first of all I'm very glad that there are so many concrete proposals in there. I welcome all of your eight guiding ideas. And I particularly like this repeated emphasis on leadership, effectiveness, accountability, and performance.

The UK strongly supports your efforts to bring about meaningful change and we will carry on putting our money where our mouth is. We're the second largest donor to the UN development system. We're very proud of that, and we want to make our funding support your reform agenda. And I know that my International Development Secretary, Priti Patel, is keen to discuss that with you as soon as possible.

So we will keep calling for ambition, we will keep calling for a bold approach to UN reform. And we will do so with the millions who need the UN development system in mind. They deserve more than we are currently offering them. They deserve an improvement on the status quo. This report is a very good start, but it is just the first step. We now need all of us to come together to help the UN to deliver it, and build on it, to keep the UN relevant and central to the multilateral needs of today.

Thank you.

[Press release: PM meeting with Ukrainian Prime Minister Groysman: 5 July 2017](#)

The Prime Minister welcomed Ukrainian Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman to Downing Street this afternoon for a bilateral meeting.

The talks took place ahead of the [Ukraine Reform Conference](#) which the Foreign Secretary will co-host with Prime Minister Groysman tomorrow.

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Groysman agreed that tomorrow's event will demonstrate continued international support for Ukraine's efforts to reform its economy and tackle corruption.

They discussed the launch of Ukraine's Reform Action Plan 2017 to 20 and the Prime Minister welcomed the progress that Ukraine has made so far.

She praised the political will demonstrated by Prime Minister Groysman and stressed the importance of maintaining momentum on this vital issue.

On security, the Prime Minister said that the UK remains steadfast in our support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine and in our condemnation of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea.

They agreed on the importance of maintaining sanctions on Russia to keep up political pressure until the full implementation of the Minsk Agreement, and they discussed the importance of improving the capability of the Ukrainian armed forces.

News story: Parents urged to remind teenagers to get MenACWY vaccine

Parents are being reminded this summer to encourage their 18 year old children to get vaccinated against deadly meningitis and septicaemia. Those who are due to leave school this summer, or aged 17 to 18 and are not in school (born between 1 September 1998 and 31 August 1999) are now eligible.

The MenACWY jab protects against 4 strains of meningococcal disease which cause meningitis and septicaemia, known as strains A, C, W and Y. MenW is one of the most aggressive and life threatening forms and meningococcal disease can be fatal. Many survivors are left with life changing disabilities, including brain damage and loss of limbs. The MenACWY vaccine remains the best form of protection against the A, C, W, and Y strains with a 100% effectiveness rate in those that have been vaccinated so far.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at PHE said:

The MenACWY vaccination programme will save lives and prevent lifelong and devastating disability. We have seen a rapid increase in MenW cases across England in recent years and vaccination is the most effective way of protecting against infection.

Young people are particularly at risk as they are carriers of the disease. Being in confined environments with close contact, such as university halls, hostels when travelling, or attending festivals, increase the chances of infection if unprotected.

Get vaccinated as soon as possible, remain vigilant and seek urgent medical help if you have concerns for yourself or friends.

New entrants to higher education (university freshers) are also eligible. Anyone who is eligible and has missed vaccination in previous years remains eligible up to their 25th birthday and is urged to have the MenACWY vaccine.

While the vaccine also helps protect against Men A, C, W and Y, it does not

cover all forms of meningococcal disease. It is therefore important for parents and young people to be vigilant in spotting early symptoms and to seek early medical assistance if they are concerned. Not everyone will develop these symptoms and they can appear in any order but common symptoms may include:

- pale, blotchy skin with or without a rash
- irritability and/or confusion
- severe headache, joint or muscle pains
- dislike of bright lights
- stiff neck
- convulsions or seizures
- fever, cold hands and feet
- vomiting
- diarrhoea
- drowsiness or difficult to wake up

Vinny Smith, Chief Executive of Meningitis Research Foundation said:

Sadly, we know too many people who have been struck down by MenW. 18 year old Lauren Sandell fell ill last year in her second week of university, having tried to get the vaccine before leaving home. She mistook her early symptoms for a mild case of food poisoning. 2 days later her symptoms got rapidly worse and she died just as the ambulance arrived.

If you don't know whether you are entitled to the free vaccine, our online eligibility checker will make it easy to find out. If everyone who is eligible gets it, this will not only protect them but will also help protect others by stopping the bacteria from spreading.

Dr Tom Nutt, Chief Executive at the charity Meningitis Now, said:

It's vital that young people and their parents are not complacent about the threat of meningitis, and we urge all those eligible for this lifesaving vaccination to arrange to get it today. Meningitis can be a devastating disease, killing 1 in 10 and leaving a third of survivors with lifelong after-effects such as hearing loss, epilepsy, limb loss or learning difficulties. With teenagers being a high-risk group, we welcome this timely reminder for parents to ensure their loved ones take this easy step to help protect themselves.

News story: Tenth UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group

The Tenth meeting of the biannual UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group took place in London on 4-5 July 2017, co-chaired by the UK's Minister for the Middle East, Mr Alistair Burt MP, and Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Khaled Al Jarallah.

The Ministers thanked officials for progress made during the work of the Joint Steering Group and agreed to examine new areas such as international development and humanitarian affairs at the next meeting in Kuwait. Signing a formal action plan, they expressed their commitment to working together over the next six months to advance the close Kuwait – UK relationship to the benefit of both countries.

Ministers agreed to continue to develop collaboration on trade, migration, security, defence, cyber security, healthcare, science, education and culture. Both sides underlined the importance of the Joint Steering Group to fostering closer ties and to realise technical level cooperation -the breadth of discussions demonstrating that the historic relationship, built around the cornerstones of defence, security and trade, continues to evolve to meet modern challenges, including cyber security. They also welcomed the deepening of defence cooperation which remained strong. Both sides affirmed their commitment to ongoing work to refresh the Defence Cooperation Accord.

The discussion on security focussed on combating shared threats, including protecting aviation interests through improved airport security. Together, the Ministers committed to continuing to support efforts by British and Kuwaiti businesses to increase trade links and investment. Cooperation in the field of healthcare and health infrastructure was also discussed. Both sides remain committed to removing barriers and to promote increased travel, study, business and trade.

Ministers also affirmed their strong commitment to continuing to cooperate on scientific and innovation research collaboration, education and the importance of cultural exchanges. These continue to be an important opportunity to build on our shared history and values, and engage the next generation of leaders and academics.

Exchanging views on recent political developments in the Middle East region, Mr Burt and Ambassador Al Jarallah also had a closed discussion with the British Minister underlining UK support for Kuwait's mediation efforts to bring a resolution to the Qatar dispute.

Further information

Statement to Parliament: Grenfell rehousing

With permission Mr Speaker, I would like to update the House on the ongoing work to rehouse the victims of the tragedy at Grenfell Tower.

Three weeks have now passed since the fire.

As we all know it soon became clear that the delivery of the initial response on the ground was simply not good enough.

Since then much has been done to support victims.

To see that justice is done. And to ensure that other buildings around the country are safe.

But throughout, our first priority has been helping victims who have suffered such an unspeakable trauma.

We have been working hard to ensure that they have all the support they need.

Securing emergency accommodation.

And making financial and emotional support available as quickly as possible.

The response efforts have been coordinated by the Grenfell Response Team, led by John Barradell.

He is being supported by colleagues drawn from London councils, the wider local government sector, the voluntary sector, police, health and fire services as well as central government.

And I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to them all for their immense efforts over the last few weeks.

The new leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Elizabeth Campbell, has given a fulsome apology for the inadequate initial response.

She has also asked for help from central government to put things right.

As the Communities Secretary has set out in a [written ministerial statement](#) today we will be establishing an independent Taskforce to help the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea build their capability.

So they can deal with the longer term challenge of recovery.

Rehousing victims

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister promised that we would make an offer of new temporary housing to all those who have lost their homes as a result of the

fire, within 3 weeks.

These are good-quality, fully-furnished homes so that families can move on from emergency accommodation and live – rent-free – in a proper home whilst permanent accommodation, on equal terms, is found.

158 families from Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk have been identified in need of such housing.

I can confirm that every family that is ready to talk to the housing team has been offered a temporary home.

139 have received offers of accommodation.

19 families have not yet been ready to engage in this process.

We need to respect that.

Some are still in hospital as a result of their injuries.

In some cases the people on the ground offering these families support have been clear that it would be inappropriate at this time to ask them to make a decision about where they will live. These families, Mr Speaker, have been through unimaginable trauma.

And we need to go at the pace that they want to go.

What matters above all else is what the families individually want.

The Grenfell Response Team has been working with the 139 families currently engaged with the process to match them with appropriate temporary accommodation. And to start to talk to them about their long-term needs.

The housing team have identified and secured over 200 good quality properties so that residents can have a choice where to live.

I know some have raised concerns about the quality of the accommodation offered.

All properties have been inspected by the housing team to ensure they are in a good condition.

Now, my Rt Hon Friend the Communities Secretary personally has seen an example of the kind of property on offer.

Representatives of local residents groups have also seen and been assured of the quality.

And if the Shadow Minister would find it helpful I would be very happy to visit some of these properties with him so he can assure himself of their quality.

All of the properties are local.

Either in Kensington and Chelsea or a neighbouring borough.

This will mean that families can continue to be near their friends and relatives, go to the same GP, and send their children to the same school.

14 offers of temporary accommodation have been accepted, and 3 families have already moved in.

And I expect this number to increase but we have to respect the pace at which families want to move.

I have personally met, Mr Speaker, over 30 of the families who have been directly affected. And from talking to them I understand there are many reasons why some are reluctant to take up these offers.

Some might choose to remain in hotels until they have an offer of a permanent tenancy.

We also understand one of the big issues holding people back is the lack of trust.

Some families were told that they were moving into Grenfell Tower on a temporary basis and then years later they were still there.

Their concerns are entirely understandable – that is trust which we need to work hard to earn.

We also have to respect their decision if they do not wish to move out of temporary accommodation, before permanent housing is available.

We will keep on making offers to families of local homes we think would be suitable for them.

But no-one will be forced into a home that they do not want to move to. And I want to respond to a number of reports which have been made, claiming people are being told to move far from London.

Or that they may be deemed homeless if they do not accept an offer. I want to be absolutely clear: if this is ever suggested to a victim then this is completely unacceptable.

I have already stated that if anyone is aware of an individual family which is not receiving the offer we have promised, please tell me, and we will fix this.

And I repeat that call to the House now. So let me set out again what the government has committed to do:

Every household that is ready to talk, has been offered temporary accommodation.

The housing team will continue to work with families to ensure that their individual needs are met.

As my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister said, everyone whose home was destroyed by the fire will be guaranteed a new home on the same terms as the one they lost.

And this means:

- paying the same rent
- with the same level of security
- and in the same area

When it comes to permanent housing we have already announced a new block of social housing that will provide 68 new homes in Kensington Row.

We are urgently working with a number of developers to secure similar properties. Either in Kensington and Chelsea or very close to North Kensington, so families can stay in the same area.

Mr Speaker, these negotiations have not yet concluded and we need to work closely with the residents to make sure that the sort of properties we are able to make available will match what they want.

There were 17 leaseholders who lost their homes and we are working with them to make sure that they do not lose out financially because of the fire.

I met recently with a group of leaseholders, and we are working with them individually to find the right solution for them.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, on my visits to the Westway, hearing the harrowing accounts of survivors has been the most humbling and moving experience of my life.

The families I have met have been through unimaginable pain. We will continue to do all we can to get them the help they need.

This tragedy should never have happened.

And we are determined to do all that we can to make sure something like this never happens again.