

Press release: Foreign Secretary visits Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson will visit Sarajevo on 5 & 6 April.

The Foreign Secretary is visiting Sarajevo to reiterate the UK's unwavering support for Bosnia and Herzegovina and to urge the country's political leaders to put aside ethnic divisions and implement urgent socio-economic reforms to promote prosperity for all its citizens.

During his visit to Sarajevo the Foreign Secretary will meet with BiH's Presidency, Chair of the Council of Ministers and entity Prime Ministers and Foreign Minister.

The Foreign Secretary will also visit the State Investigation and Protection Agency where he will see how the UK is supporting efforts to prevent terrorism and fight organised crime in the region.

This is part of the UK's wider support for the Western Balkans. We have spent over £7.5m to improve the business environment, increase stability and strengthen the rule of law, and in 2018 we will host the Western Balkans Summit in London.

Ahead of his visit, the Foreign Secretary said:

The Western Balkans is a key region for the UK. We are committed to playing an active and supportive role.

The UK has invested significantly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We co-launched with Germany an initiative to inject momentum into BiH's stalling reform process. We believe this process will lead to a stable, secure and prosperous BiH.

During my visit, I will be urging BiH's political leaders to put ethnic divisions aside and focus on the issues that matter to all citizens in BiH: jobs and economic growth.

Further information

News story: UK personnel arrive in

Poland and Estonia

The British Army's Light Dragoons have arrived in Poland as part the UK commitment to NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in Eastern Europe, taking the total deployment in the region to nearly 1,000.

Supporting the US led battle group in Poland, 150 UK personnel have travelled from their base in Catterick Garrison to arrive this week in Orzysz, Poland in Jackal and Coyote light reconnaissance vehicles.

The regiment will be based in Poland for at least six months, when they will be replaced by another unit to carry on our enduring commitment to the region.

Meanwhile the arrival of the remaining UK personnel into Estonia this week, forming part of a nearly 800-strong British-led battle group, means nearly 1000 troops are providing deterrence in Eastern Europe.

Soldiers from 5 Rifles battle group, based in Bulford, Wiltshire and The Queen's Royal Hussars, based in Paderborn, Germany, have travelled to Estonia to work under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wilson.

The commitments in the Baltic region will be augmented by the deployment of RAF Typhoon aircraft to Romania later this year, to carry out a NATO Air Policing mission in the Black Sea.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

The UK is stepping up its support for NATO's collective defence through our deployments across the alliance.

British personnel are playing a leading role in NATO: delivering deterrence and defence in Estonia and Poland and air policing in Romania underlines our commitment to the security of Europe.

On Monday, Defence Minister Earl Howe, joined by His Excellency Mr Lauri Bambus, Estonian Ambassador, bade farewell to Estonia-bound personnel at RAF Brize Norton.

Defence Minister Earl Howe said:

The men and women of 5 Rifles have travelled to Estonia as a part of the biggest reinforcement of NATO's collective defence in a generation, standing by our allies and working closely with forces from across the Alliance.

The final UK vehicles also departed Marchwood, UK last week, carrying nearly 200 vehicles including Warriors and Panthers vehicles.

Last week also saw two trains carrying French vehicles arrive in Tapa, Estonia, supporting the UK-led battalion.

Credit Estonian Defence Forces

Press release: PM meeting with King Salman of Saudi Arabia: 5 April 2017

The PM and King Salman held talks on a wide range of subjects, including security and strengthening ties between businesses in Saudi Arabia and the UK. The Prime Minister pointed out that security relationships between the 2 countries had saved many lives in the UK.

They also discussed working together to address the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

During the meeting at the Royal Palace, King Salman awarded the Prime Minister the Order of King Abdulaziz. The Saudi Arabian Order of Merit was established in 1971 by King Faisal.

The honour has in the past been awarded to other G7 heads of state, including President Obama, Prime Minister Abe, and Prime Minister Modi.

Press release: Security Vetting Appeals Panel appointments: April 2017

The Prime Minister has approved the appointment of four new members to the Security Vetting Appeals Panel. They are James Barron CBE, Sally Berlin, Nicholas Griffin QC and Claire Stokes, who have all been appointed with effect from 1 April 2017.

The new appointments replace Sue Jarvis, Stephen Monk, Claire Smith and Robert Wright who recently retired from the Panel after several years of service. At the same time, the appointments of the Chair, Sir George Newman and Deputy Chair, Sir Stephen Silber have been extended to 31 March 2019 and 31 March 2018 respectively.

The [Security Vetting Appeals Panel](#) was set up in 1997 to provide an independent means of challenging a decision to refuse or withdraw national security vetting clearance. It is available to hear appeals from individuals

in government departments, the armed forces and other organisations, or their contractors, who have exhausted the internal appeals process and remain dissatisfied with the outcome.

The Chair and Deputy Chair are retired members of the judiciary, with other members having relevant experience at a senior level both inside and outside government. They form a panel from which 3, including the Chair or the Deputy Chair, are normally selected on each occasion when the Panel is required to hear an appeal.

These appointments have been made in accordance with the [Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies](#).

News story: Happy anniversary, payroll giving

Launched in 1987, payroll giving is a way to give to charity straight from your wages or pension without paying tax on it.

Over the course of three decades, the scheme has raised over £1.8 billion for good causes thanks to the generosity of employees. More than a million UK employees currently give in this way.

As part of the celebrations, the [Association of Payroll Giving Organisations](#) and the [Institute of Fundraising Payroll Giving Special Interest Group](#) are showcasing six individuals and what payroll giving means to them. From employee donors to HR managers, find out about their [payroll giving stories](#).

How to get involved:

- Find out more about [how to donate](#) through payroll giving
- If you are an employer, you can find out how to [set up a scheme](#)
- Show your support for payroll giving on social media by joining the [Thunderclap](#) and using the #PayrollGivingAt30 hashtag