

## [Statement by the Spokesperson on the attack on an Afghan National Defence Forces base in Balkh Province](#)

Our hearts are again with the Afghan people at this time. The European Union stands in firm solidarity with the Afghan authorities and our international allies in the fight against terrorism.

During discussions over the last four days in Beijing with State Councillor, Yang Jiechi and in New Delhi with Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Minister of State for External Affairs M.J. Akbar, the High Representative has emphasised the importance of the engagement of the international community, and in particular regional actors, in bringing peace to Afghanistan. This is also a message she will take to Moscow next week for discussions with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Only an inclusive, peaceful resolution of the conflict can bring the stability and prosperity that Afghan citizens deserve.

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## [Multilateral banks to deepen collaboration with private sector to boost inclusive, sustainable infrastructure](#)

Leaders of the top multilateral development banks (MDBs) have agreed to deepen their collaboration to encourage private sector investment in vital infrastructure needed to support sustainable and inclusive economic growth throughout the world.

Under the theme of “Delivering Inclusive, Sustainable Infrastructure,” the [Global Infrastructure Forum 2017](#) provided a venue to discuss how MDBs can best work with countries and the private sector to create markets for infrastructure projects. The forum brought together potential investors, representatives of the United Nations and the G20 with the heads of the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Inter-American Investment Corporation, International Finance Corporation, Islamic Development Bank, New Development Bank and the World Bank.

Basic infrastructure services – like roads, water and sewage lines, and electrical power – are scarce in many developing countries. Over one billion people live without electricity, more than 660 million people don't have access to clean drinking water, and one in three people lack access to flushing toilets and sewerage infrastructure. In addition, countries face the urgent need to invest in climate-resilient infrastructure and renewable, efficient energy sources.

With trillions of dollars in capital sitting on the sidelines earning low or even negative returns, deeper engagement with the private sector can create win-win scenarios where investors earn better returns on long-term investments and developing countries get much needed investment and expertise.

In order to fulfill commitments that countries throughout the world made to meet the ambitious [Sustainable Development Goals](#), the MDBs pledged not only to leverage their resources by joining forces to co-finance projects, but also to help generate interest among private sector investors in Public-Private Partnerships and the development of infrastructure as an asset class for institutional investors.

These pledges are included in the MDBs' Outcome Statement, issued today at the Forum, which will be accessible at <https://pppknowledge.org/2017giform>.

Among the speakers at the day-long event were Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, and Wolfgang Schäuble, Finance Minister of Germany, which currently chairs the G20.

Eight parallel sessions explored a variety of subjects:

- How to ensure that infrastructure meets environmental and climate change standards;
- How to help cities meet their infrastructure needs and climate objectives;
- The role of national development banks in implementing renewable energy and energy efficiency programs;
- Mobilization of private and concessional resources;
- Special challenges faced by least developed countries, small island developing states and landlocked developing countries;
- Risk mitigation for emerging market infrastructure;
- Infrastructure as an asset class for institutional investors;
- How to prepare projects with an eye on costs and quality control; and constraints and opportunities for energy and economic development in Africa.

The full agenda of the Global Infrastructure Forum 2017 is available on the [Forum's website](#), along with a [reference guide on Public-Private Partnerships \(PPPs\)](#), country data, information on specific infrastructure sectors, key databases and other tools.

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## Seven years of Tory government. Seven ways they've failed Scotland.

This year marks seven years of Tory government – despite people in Scotland rejecting the Tories at every single General Election for over sixty years.

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## The government's approach to making working more worthwhile for families

I have been sent a reminder of changes coming in this April. We want to support people in work, as well as ensure the welfare system works as a safety net for those who need it.

The measures include:

- A further increase in the Personal Allowance to £11,500; an increase of over 70% since 2010. Since the start of this Parliament we have cut income tax for 31m people and taken 1.3m of the lowest paid out of income tax altogether.
  - Increasing support for low earners by raising the National Living Wage to £7.50.
  - Helping working parents with childcare costs by launching Tax Free Childcare from 28 April – saving working parents up to £2000 per year for each child under the age of 12.
  - Increasing income for 3 million households by reducing the Universal Credit taper rate from 65 per cent to 63 per cent.
  - Investing £330m in practical employment support to help disabled people back into work.
  - Helping savers with the launch of a new NS&I bond offering a market-leading interest rate of 2.2% and increasing the annual ISA limit to £20,000.
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# Way Back When – A Walk along the Hawkhill

From the Curator of Museum Services, University of Dundee :



**Way Back When – A Walk along the Hawkhill**

**Saturday 29 April 2017, 2.30pm**

**Meet in the exhibition, Tower Foyer Gallery, University of Dundee**

Many of the photographs in Walter Simms' exhibition were taken in the Hawkhill, parts of which were then changing beyond all recognition.

In this special guided walk we will explore the changing face of this historic street, with the help of photographs, artworks, poetry and memories, to try to bring its rich and varied past back to life.

The event will include a chance to see some of Duncan of Jordanstone tutor Joseph McKenzie's acclaimed photographs of the Hawkhill, courtesy of our colleagues at The McManus: Dundee's Art Gallery and Museum.

Free admission but please book [here](#).