

Press release: Baroness Anelay's visit to East Africa

Baroness Anelay, the Prime Minister's Special Representative for Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict (PSVI), will travel this week to Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi, where she will see first-hand the support provided by the UK on preventing sexual violence, strengthening human rights and delivering humanitarian aid.

The Minister will also meet with a number of senior government representatives, including Ugandan President Museveni, and officials at the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She will also host a number of events with civil society, human rights defenders and members of the judiciary.

Speaking ahead of the visit, Baroness Anelay said:

I am delighted to have the opportunity to visit the region and see first-hand the work of the UK to tackle sexual violence and support survivors of these atrocious crimes.

This visit comes at an important time. Preventing sexual violence, ending the culture of impunity and ending survivor stigma remain top priorities for the UK. I am proud of the 17 Peace Support Training Centres that the UK has provided for training across the African continent since 2001.

I look forward to seeing the impact of our work. The UK is a friend and close partner of the region. We will continue to work together on shared challenges and opportunities.

Baroness Anelay will first travel to Kenya, where she will visit the British Peace Support Team (BPST (EA)) who are delivering teaching courses to police and security personnel from across the region on mechanisms for prevention and response to SGBV.

In Uganda, the Minister will visit a refugee settlement to see UK humanitarian support in action, meet survivors of sexual violence in Gulu refugee camp, and visit a gender-based violence shelter in Kampala. Despite the conflict in Northern Uganda ending over a decade ago, stigma suffered by survivors continues to impact many aspects of their lives, including access to jobs and community services. In collaboration with organisations such as the Refugee Law Project and World Vision, the UK supports a number of projects in Uganda which help provide both physical and psychological support to survivors of sexual violence and children born of rape.

Before she travels to Burundi itself, in Rwanda the Minister will meet with Burundian human rights defenders in exile, independent media and NGO partners delivering UK projects. In Burundi, the Minister will meet with the Minister

of Foreign Affairs and UN, AU and EU representatives to discuss how international partners can best work with the Burundian Government to support inclusive dialogue and bring a resolution to the protracted political crisis.

Whilst in Burundi, Baroness Anelay will also visit Centre SERUKA, which provides services for survivors of sexual violence. The UK provides support to a number of initiatives across Burundi, empowering women to prevent and address the impact of sexual violence. These initiatives reduce stigmatisation, promote the role of women in peace building and support faith and community leaders to investigate incidences of sexual violence.

Notes to Editors

1. The British Peace and Support Team (EA) in Kenya delivers pan-spectrum training as part of the UK's commitment to long term peace and support in East Africa.
2. This year alone, 9,500 military, police and civilians from across the region will be trained in specialist areas ranging from Protection of Civilians/Human Rights, through numerous types of tactical training to high-end Weapons Technical Intelligence and Counter-IED courses. BPST(EA)'s current primary focus is pre-deployment and in-mission training for troops making up the AU force in Somalia – AMISOM – prioritising those niche areas which are requested by regional militaries as enabling them to fight more effectively. The team also provides limited Counter Illegal Wildlife Trade training in security specific areas to Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania wildlife agencies.

Further information