

# News story: Prime Minister praises Royal Air Force at Centenary Reception

The Prime Minister hosted the Defence Secretary, three Service Chiefs and current and former service personnel at Downing Street today to recognise the dedication of those who have served in the RAF over the last 100 years.

More than 150 guests attended the event, including personnel from the Navy and Army, in recognition of the contribution that all three services made in the formation of the RAF in 1918. Attendees were greeted with a ceremonial welcome guard at the entrance of Number 10, while inside the RAF Salon Orchestra played music from across the three services.

Commemorative items were displayed during the event, including memorabilia from World War One, marking the centenary of the Great War's conclusion this year. Guests also passed by a Red Arrow Hawk facsimile, noting the key role played in national events by the RAF Aerobatic team since their formation.

The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, introduced the Prime Minister and Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson MP to cadets, new recruits and veterans, including the last surviving female pilot from World War Two, 101 year-old Mary Ellis, who were thanked for their contributions to the service at home and abroad.

Addressing the audience, Prime Minister Theresa May said:

For one hundred years, the RAF has proved it is not only the first independent air force in the world, but the finest. It stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines and the Army in defending our nation and promoting our values, and I am delighted that members of each Service are here this evening.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier said:

It is an enormous privilege to be in Downing Street to commemorate the rich heritage and the legacy which the RAF of today is proud to inherit. We celebrate the successes of today's Force – still young and diverse, at the cutting edge of technology and innovation, attracting and inspiring people of outstanding talent who are the future of our Service.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

From the Battle of Britain to countering Daesh in Iraq and Syria, the RAF has played a proud and vital role in keeping Britain safe

for a century. It is an honour to meet veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country, and to meet some of the RAF's inspired new generation who will continue to keep watch and protect our nation over the next 100 years.

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## Speech: Support for the G5 Sahel Force and Reducing Instability

Thank you Madam President. And may I thank our briefers from DPKO, from the G5 Sahel Task Force, from the African Union and from the European Union, and I think your briefing together illustrates perfectly the partnership approach that's been taken so far and which we need to continue.

The United Kingdom fully supports the G5 Sahel Joint Force. Its growing trans-border capability, coupled with its regional expertise and knowledge, are crucial to tackling the cross-border threat posed by terrorist organisations and to tackling the instability in the Sahel. Since we visited as a Council last year, a lot of work has been done building on the work already done that we saw on that visit. But efforts need to be redoubled to achieve the full operationalisation across all sectors in the coming months if the cross-border threat is going to be addressed.

As set out in the Secretary-General's report, funding mobilisation is a key issue affecting the Force. Despite many donors' generosity while pledging, the disbursement of the majority of those pledges remains outstanding, which is disrupting operations and long-term planning. In addition to our development and humanitarian funding of \$380 million over the last three years and to our contribution through the EU funds, the UK has pledged an additional \$2.7 million for infrastructure support to the element of the Niger component of the Joint Force and for helicopter-borne medical evacuation support. We intend to make that funding accessible next month, and we strongly urge all partners to make good on the financial commitments they have made to the G5 Sahel Joint Force as soon as possible.

The UK recognises the contribution of regional actors which are working towards stability in the Sahel, including MINUSMA, Operation BARKHANE and various EU missions including the EU Training Mission Mali. We strongly encourage strengthening the coordination mechanisms between these actors to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

Madam President, in addition to these regional activities, it is important that individual countries continue to take action at a national level. In Mali, we welcome recent progress on the peace process and we hope that this momentum continues up to, and beyond, July's Presidential elections. Political efforts must be redoubled if we are to genuinely implement the

Peace Agreement. And we as the Security Council should not hesitate to use the tools available, including, if necessary, sanctions against any of those who obstruct that process. We particularly urge the full participation of women in the implementation and monitoring of the Peace Agreement.

Military operations, including by the Joint Force, will only succeed if they are based firmly in a larger framework of security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian. In this regard, we urge the G5 Sahel States to take forward the establishment of the Groupe de Soutien in order to address the challenges faced by the Sahel in a holistic and comprehensive manner. Development assistance must address the drivers of conflict, for example by addressing marginalisation or helping promote more accountable governance. And development work must be linked to the G5 Sahel and indeed to MINUSMA's operations. It's important that military operations go hand in hand with the provision of services for the population. We therefore look forward to seeing the details of a revamped Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, which must have a holistic, cross-United Nations and cross-border approach to conflict prevention at its heart. This is where the Sustaining Peace concept will be tested, and let us hope we will not have to relearn the lessons that we have learnt in many other theatres.

Military action must of course be conducted in full compliance with human rights law and international humanitarian law. We welcome the endorsement of the human rights law and international humanitarian law compliance framework as part of the technical arrangement between the EU, the G5 and the UN, and the G5 Sahel's commitment to implement this with the support of OHCHR and MINUSMA. Failure to protect civilians will feed extremist recruitment and put at risk future funding contributions. And I support the comments made by my American colleague about the recent incident.

Madam President, a solution that addresses the underlying causes of instability is the only way to ensure long-term security in the region. The ultimate solution will be a political one, with development assistance and military support. It must be inclusive and ensure the full and equal participation of the whole of society, including women, to succeed. It must provide economic opportunities and present an attractive alternative to extremism. This is the best way to improve the lives of those who live in the Sahel and it's the best way to improve our collective peace and security.

Thank you Madam President.

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**Speech: PM's speech at RAF100  
Centenary celebration in Downing**

# Street

It is great to see so many servicemen and women here for these special centenary celebrations – and a particular honour to welcome Mary Ellis – who flew Spitfires and bombers to frontline bases in World War Two – and Colin Bell – who was a pathfinder and Mosquito pilot.

I want to begin by telling you about an extraordinary moment recently, when on the way back from Cyprus, my plane was intercepted by two RAF Typhoon jets.

As they – I am not sure of the right expression here – pulled up alongside my plane, they tipped their wings and revealed their weapons – a gesture that I understand is a warning, perhaps a little like a lion baring its teeth.

It was a most extraordinary sight. A true heart in mouth moment.

And even though I knew it was a mock exercise, I was given a rare glimpse into what it must be like in a Russian aircraft probing UK airspace, or in an airliner not responding to air traffic control.

No one who has witnessed such a moment could ever doubt the skill, the rapidity of response or the might of Britain's Royal Air Force.

And it made me immensely proud – proud not only of our impressive military force but of the skill, courage and dedication of our airmen and women who for 100 years have so valiantly defended our skies and kept our enemies at bay.

From those flying aces of the First World War to the pilots of Typhoon jets that can break the sound barrier.

From those early pioneering engineers to the ground crew, technicians, air traffic controllers, nurses, medical staff, drivers, and flight operations officers of today.

The men and women of the Royal Air Force have always stood for bravery, service, duty, and standing alongside your peers in the Royal Navy and Army.

And today, in an increasingly uncertain world, your skill and courage are vital to the air and space power which allows the UK to respond quickly and decisively around the world.

Whether that is mounting immediate disaster relief, or an evacuation operation as we did in the Caribbean last autumn. Fighting Daesh in Syria and Iraq as the second largest contributor to air operations in the region. Or conducting a long range precision strike mission within a matter of hours as we did in Syria last month – one of the gravest decisions I have ever taken as Prime Minister.

And as the threats we face continue to intensify and evolve – from the

resurgence of state based threats to the regional instability exploited by extremists – air power will continue to play a decisive role in protecting the security and prosperity of our nation, people and allies.

So it is fantastic that next month our F-35 Lightning stealth fighter jets will arrive in the UK ahead of schedule, ensuring that Britain remains at the forefront of international air power – and maritime power too with our Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers.

And it is fitting that 617 Squadron – the squadron of the legendary Dambusters – will be stood up again and its pilots will fly these most advanced fighter jets.

But it is not just in combat and emergency operations that the RAF has made such a significant contribution to this country and our way of life – it is also in the desire to give back, and the support you give to communities here and overseas. From sustaining our links with the Falklands or resupplying the French military in Mali to your countless contributions to communities across the United Kingdom.

For one hundred years, the RAF has proved it is not only the first independent air force in the world, but the finest. It stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines and the Army in defending our nation and promoting our values, and I am delighted that members of each Service are here this evening.

And to those here today on the threshold of their careers, I want to say what a great choice you have made.

Because, in whichever branch of the Armed Forces you serve, you will be the worthy successors of those brave, innovative and inspirational men and women who have gone before you.

From the Battle of Britain to Bomber Command, from the Falklands to the Gulf War, from humanitarian relief operations to those who fly today's missions against Daesh in Syria and Iraq – we owe the men and women of our RAF an immense debt of gratitude, as we do all our servicemen and women.

On behalf of the nation, thank you. Thank you for your dedication. Thank you for the many sacrifices you make. Thank you for a century of extraordinary service and courage.

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## **Speech: Home Secretary Police Federation speech 2018**

Good morning and thank you Calum.

Now this conference has quite a reputation.

A reputation for giving speakers a difficult time.

For asking questions that sometimes no one wants to answer.

For having the toughest crowd of any speech in the political calendar.

Anyway, at least that's what the Prime Minister told me!

Now most Home Secretaries get a bit more run-up time than I've had before standing on this stage.

They have time to prepare themselves, cement their views, to hone their points and to maybe think of a few jokes.

I haven't had that luxury.

I'm still in my first full month on the job.

So there's still a lot for me to learn.

I know that you might be sceptical about what I'm about to say.

You've seen Home Secretaries come and go –

I think I'm the 40th Home Secretary since the Federation was founded 99 years ago.

They've come from every point on the political spectrum.

But one thing we've all had in common is that not one of us, not one Home Secretary, has ever served as a police officer...

Not one.

And I've been told I'm the first Home Secretary with a police officer in my immediate family.

Now I can't blame you if you're sitting there thinking to yourself –

"this guy may talk a good game, but he's just like every other politician."

And I'm sure some of you, right now, are thinking that there's no way I can understand policing.

The work you do, the difference you make, the challenges that you face.

That I just don't – and that I won't – get it.

But that's where you're wrong.

My family grew up on a road in Bristol described by one national newspaper as "Britain's most dangerous street".

One journalist referred to it – and I quote – he called it a “lawless hellhole where murder, rape, shootings, drug pushing, prostitution, knifings and violent robbery are commonplace”.

But to us, it was just home.

All my parents wanted for me and my brothers was for their boys to do well – to work hard and to play by the rules.

But today I’ve got a confession.

When I was younger, I was in a gang.

A gang of two.

It involved me and one of my brothers.

I was ten, he was eight.

Our gang was called The Crime Busters.

Our mission was to find crime and to bust it.

Our equipment: two knackered old bikes and two cheapo walkie-talkies.

We had a passion to find and fight crime on Britain’s most dangerous street.

One of us used to patrol the streets the other one used to hang out at a phone box in case there was an incident and he had to call 999.

We didn’t get very far the walkie-talkie had a distance of about three metres.

I hope your equipment is a bit better.

Years later, that brother is still a crime buster, only this time, for real – as a Chief Superintendent – having started as a PC some 25 years ago.

Over the years, I’ve heard what he has to say about policing.

I know the tricky situations that he’s been in.

He’s been hospitalised more times by being assaulted on duty than I care to remember.

I remember him missing Christmas once after having his jaw dislocated.

I’ve seen the impact the job has on family life.

And as you would expect from a brother, he doesn’t shield me from the truth.

Long before I was a politician, he took me out on a ride-along in the back of his police car in Bristol city centre.

I thought it would be an interesting insight into his job.

But I wasn't prepared for the abuse he and his colleague received that night:

Teenagers giving them the middle finger, swearing and spitting.

And worst of all, at one point when his car approached the lights and slowed down...

...one teenager leaned over and yelled at my brother –

“You Paki bastard”.

That was the first time it really hit me just how hard and horrible it can be being a police officer.

I asked my brother why the police spent so much time in that neighbourhood given that they clearly weren't welcome.

And you know what he said?

“It's where we're needed most”.

Only five words...

...but five words that have summed up for me everything that makes our police officers so special.

That sense of duty is what drives you in everything that you do.

From physically taking on violent criminals, to breaking bad news to bereaved families.

You are there.

From handling tragedies like Grenfell, to providing security and peace of mind at events like the Royal Wedding.

You are there.

There is no greater testament to your bravery and the honour of police than the roll call of those who have fallen in the line of duty in the past year.

We are deeply indebted to these officers who made the ultimate sacrifice serving the public...

... and we must take this moment to remember them and the families they have left behind.

So, I would like to pay tribute to PC James Dixon and PC David Fields.

And PC Steven Jenkins who fell ill whilst on duty and then passed away.

This week, we also remember the extraordinary acts of bravery from police in



the aftermath of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack.

We remember those officers who ran in to help and protect the many innocent people who found themselves caught up in that attack.

We remember DC Elaine McIver who lost her life in the attack whilst off-duty.

And we must also remember those officers who got to London Bridge following that attack in just eight minutes. Saving countless lives.

I am also hugely grateful to Detective Sergeant Nick Bailey...

...one of the first at the scene at Salisbury who put himself at great risk so that he could help others.

You see, every single day, you make the brave decision to pull on that uniform and go out to work....

... not knowing what you'll have to deal with on your shift.

People call policing a 'job like no other,' but you simply call it 'the job'.

For me, this world of policing yes it may be new – but this is my fifth job in government.

And in every single role that I've had in government I have seen the importance of the police.

When I was Culture Secretary, I saw how much harder the job was made because of social media.

As Business Secretary, I knew that a strong police force creates the environment that we need for our economy to prosper –

Everything from defending property rights to tackling fraud.

As Communities Secretary, I saw first-hand how you work in some of the most challenging places, where the underlying problems are not of your making.

And in my life before politics, I saw many places in the world where the public suffered from the absence of a professional police force.

I saw how bad things could become when the police are ineffective, corrupt, or too politicised.

That's why I see the police as one of the institutions we can be – and are – most proud of in our country.

But I'm not arrogant enough to stand here today, stand in front of you, after three weeks in the job and tell you how to do yours.

What I will say is that I am listening and that I do get it.

I get that there's increased demand.

Yes – traditional crime is down by a third since 2010 – a big credit to your hard work.

But more crimes – like hate crimes and sexual offences – are being reported than ever before.

There's also been a recent increase in serious violence – including homicides, knife and gun crime.

I am absolutely determined to put an end to the appalling violence that is terminating young lives so soon.

The threat from terrorism has also escalated and evolved.

And crime is increasingly taking place online.

The internet has emboldened criminals to break the law in the most horrifying of ways...

... with platforms that enable dangerous crimes and appalling abuse.

Since becoming Home Secretary, I've spoken to frontline officers about your experiences of crime and policing.

You've told me that you feel stretched, overburdened and not sufficiently rewarded.

I know how frustrating it is when your days off get cancelled – at very short notice.

And I know your work can take its toll on your mental and physical health.

You deserve to be respected and valued, but all too often what you get is abuse.

So let me say this.

I want you to have the resources that you need.

Since 2010, we have prioritised strengthening the economy and this involves making some difficult funding decisions throughout government.

All of us have played our part in bringing down the deficit.

So we must all continue to live within our means...

...I recognise that we need to prioritise public investment in policing.

We're giving PCCs the flexibility to increase council tax contributions to policing.

This has helped deliver a £460m increase in total police funding this year.

We're now investing over £1bn more in policing than we did three years ago,

including money raised through council tax.

But we need to think more about the long term funding of the police.

So, my pledge to you is this:

I will prioritise police funding in the Spending Review next year.

But this isn't all about money.

You have a job like no other.

You never know what you're going to be faced with.

It might be a murder case, child abuse or a serious car accident.

And it's not surprising that dealing with all that takes its toll on you.

And as you have rightly said, throughout this conference, and as Calum rightly said, we need to protect the protectors.

The government has already pledged £7.5m for a new national police welfare service – it is a step, one step, in the right direction.

But together, I want us to totally transform the welfare provision for officers.

When you're out in public trying to do your duty, you should be protected.

That's why I'm backing the Assaults on Emergency Workers Bill...

...which will include tougher penalties for those who attack police officers and other emergency service workers.

That's why I'm supporting changes to the rules on police pursuits.

To make it clear that a criminal is responsible for their decision to drive recklessly, not the police.

That's why I'm making sure that you have the right kit and the right technology to do your jobs effectively.

It makes no sense that where many of you change your personal mobiles every two years, at work you're using some technology that dates back to the 1990s.

That's why we've recently improved fingerprint technology...

... which will allow officers across the country to use smart phones to identify people faster than ever before.

That's why I also support the roll out of body worn cameras...

...which not only capture the evidence first hand but has also made people think twice before assaulting you.

And I fully support those officers who want better protective equipment like spit and bite guards.

I find it absolutely ridiculous that anyone should object to you restraining those who physically abuse you.

And of course, tasers are also an important tactical option for officers dealing with the most serious and violent criminals.

If you don't feel that you're getting the tools you need to do your job, I want to know about it.

But you don't just need kit – you need powers.

And to help you tackle violent crime.

I will be bringing forward new laws which will make it harder than ever before to buy and possess guns, knives and acid.

And as Home Secretary, I will continue to look at what other powers you need to do your jobs more effectively.

That means looking at Stop and Search.

Some of you don't feel comfortable using it.

And that's not how it should be.

I have confidence in your professional judgement.

So let me be clear,

I support the use of Stop and Search.

You have to do your job and that means protecting everyone.

Evidence shows that if you're black, you're more likely to be a homicide victim than any other ethnic group.

If Stop and Search can mean saving lives from the communities most affected, then of course it has to be right.

I am new to my job.

I don't claim to be a policing expert and I'm not going to claim to have all the answers.

But as much as possible, I want to hear from you.

I want to hear about your experiences working on the frontline.

No doubt you'll tell me much more about them as I get out and about and meet many more of you in the weeks and months, and hopefully years, that lie ahead.

And I know that Nick Hurd the Policing Minister has already spoken to all 43 forces, officers in all 43 forces and will be continuing to do that.

I'll also be setting up a much more formal Frontline Review to get your feedback and learn what you really think.

Your ideas and responses will inform what actually happens in policing.

Because I so understand that no-one knows more about policing than you do.

But I also know that the public demand – and quite rightly expect – a high standard of support from their local police.

And ultimately, I want to reach a place where every member of the public is served by a force which is at least rated 'good'.

But currently, nearly a third of forces are not.

And there is a big gap in efficiency between the top and the bottom.

So I want standards to be raised and to be more consistent.

I want any bad behaviour to be rooted out.

I want victims to get better treatment.

I want to see more collaboration and sharing best practice – at whatever level makes the most sense.

And I want the Federation to lead by example.

Showing greater transparency in the publishing of accounts and expenses, and continuing to show leadership on implementing reforms.

And I don't want any of you to believe that some changes belong in the "too hard to do" box.

I want you to be bold and ambitious and to change the bits which don't work – or put pressure on your bosses to make it happen.

It's often said that British policing is the envy of the world.

Everyone in this room wants to keep it that way.

Let's reset the relationship between the government and the police.

I will give you the tools, the powers and the back-up that you need to get the job done.

For those of you who stand on the frontline, be in no doubt, I will be standing with you.

Thank you.

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# Press release: PM meeting with the Prime Minister of Belgium: 23 May 2018

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

This afternoon the Prime Minister hosted Prime Minister Michel of Belgium for talks at Downing Street. They discussed the ongoing negotiations around the UK's exit from the EU with the PM stressing that it was important to recognise the progress made thus far. She spoke about the agreements reached on vital issues such as citizens' rights and the financial settlement and said that the agreement in principle of the implementation period had also given businesses much greater certainty. The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Michel looked forward to the June European Council.

The leaders spoke about global issues with the Prime Minister reiterating the UK's commitment to the Iran nuclear deal as the best way of neutralising the threat of a nuclear armed Iran. The leaders agreed that there are important things that the deal does not cover, but which need to be addressed such as ballistic missiles and Iran's destabilising regional activity.

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Michel spoke about the importance of multilateralism and of the rules based international system. They agreed that it was vital to restore the international norm that the use of chemical weapons can never be acceptable. The Prime Minister thanked Prime Minister Michel for the solidarity shown by Belgium following the chemical attack in Salisbury.

They discussed Russia, agreeing on the importance of continued international cooperation to tackle Russian destabilising activity in Syria, Ukraine and elsewhere.

Finally the leaders looked forward to the upcoming World Cup fixture between the England and Belgium football teams in June.