

Speech: Penny Mordaunt speech to the Bond Conference 2019

Last year my message to you was somewhat dominated by a wake-up call.

In the wake of the safeguarding scandal, large swathes of the speech I delivered some hard truths.

I told you that a culture that favoured reputation management over duty of care was evidence that the sector had forgotten three things:

The needs of those we are here to serve.

The expectations of those that enable us to – the British people.

And the values that make us who we are.

I asked you some questions. I asked you to think about what we must all do if we are to deliver for our beneficiaries and meet the expectations of those who make our work possible, your donors – and in my case the British taxpayer.

I asked you to challenge your assumptions and your behaviours and really focus on what it is actually going to take to deliver the Global Goals.

I know you've had huge challenges since that speech:

New safeguarding obligations being just one.

Finding new ways to get work done and new partners.

Navigating what Brexit might mean or not mean for your organisations and the sector.

Changes in how you raise funds, how you store data.

Against a backdrop of criticism, about what you do, and how you do it.

Against a civil society space being shut down.

A decline in charitable giving.

A economic global slowdown.

And the things which we all know that have lifted billions of people out of poverty being under attack, including democracy itself.

And it is tough to stay focussed when your day to day operation has so much incoming fire.

And a mission to leave no one behind needs a relentless focus. It's tough

stuff.

Sometimes I know that what we are all trying to get done can seem overwhelming:

261 million children still out of school.

200 million disabled people living below the poverty line.

More than half the world's population lacking access to essential health services.

And by 2050, we going to need nearly three planets to cope with our current lifestyles.

So I appreciate some of you might be feeling a little down, a little jaded, like you're pushing a boulder up a hill...

We've 11 years left to deliver those goals, this year we have our first VNR.

So today I want to give you a bit of a half-time pep talk.

And I want to make some announcements which I think will help you, in a very practical way.

But first I want to tell you what your efforts over the last 12 months have actually done.

I want to reflect on what has happened since we last met, that watershed moment of shame last year. You answered those questions I posed in wake of the safeguarding scandal.

As a result of your efforts the sector is cleaning up its act; it has higher safeguarding standards, predatory individuals are being found and brought to justice, their ability to harm the people we serve is being closed off. And the people we serve are safer.

We mobilised more than twenty countries to make changes at home and 50 nations joined with the UK in lobbying the UN. More than 500 organisations came together in London to agree new safeguarding standards and practices. Thousands of suppliers, and the world's development finance institutions and partners raised their game. We drove change across the globe.

The initiatives that you designed with law enforcement are having an effect.

And Interpol are now working to stop perpetrators moving around the aid sector. And humanitarian worker register is being set up. Capacity in other nations, who had not digitised criminal records, is being strengthened, and our own National Crime Agency now has an aid lead.

And we know of at least 91 staff who you fired out of the sector last year linked to sexual exploitation and abuse and harassment cases.

We did that in a year. We knew we had to, so we did it. And I know the huge

effort that that took from all of you.

And in thanking you I want to reiterate that the job is not done, we must continue to work to ensure that those we serve are protected.

They deserve it, our work depends upon it, and the British public require it.

And I want us to think about what else we could get done with that impetus and energy; when we clearly state a mission and ask others to help.

Remember the completely game-changing Global Disability Summit last summer. The galvanising events across the globe in advance of it, the power of civil society, the profound changes to world institutions collecting disability data. The UN at long last mainstreaming disability inclusion into its agencies.

More than 170 sets of commitments were made at that summit, and to reach half a billion people with assistive technology, supporting 30 million children with disabilities to gain an education and improve disability rights in nine countries through legislation.

You believed no one should be left behind.

You set out to make that profound change.

You got others to help.

When you put your minds to it...

You can move the world.

You can do great things.

This sector, you, are unique, the oldest and most established charity sector in the world.

And it's at the heart of what this nation stands for.

And the world needs those values and it needs you.

So it needs us to keep our chins up, to have confidence and belief in what else that we can get done.

Because the humanitarian system needs reform.

Because civil society space needs defending.

Because we have to make Brexit work.

And to keep the sector strong.

And because we just have 11 years left to deliver the Global Goals.

And none of those goals will be met without us.

Without you.

I recognise that, and in all I am doing I am looking at ways to help you achieve all that you hope to.

And I have been asking others to help too, not least my fellow Ministers.

Each Department and agency is now focussed on the Global Goals and its role in delivering them.

We are closer to the transparency, quality and coherence we need across all ODA spend.

But our efforts, however efficient, however effective aren't going to be enough.

You all know the scale of the challenge. We will not deliver the Global Goals unless we utilise every possible resource and every single advantage we have. And there are many things about this nation that I am – not least the huge number of citizens that support your organisations and give to charity every year. But in addition to that it is our talents, our technical expertise, our science base, our great institutions and organisations that make me proud. And it is what they bring that makes us relevant to so many nations around the world.

From the City of London, to the Royal Society, from the Health and Safety Executive, to the Scouts, from the Football Association to the NHS to the Tree Council, to the Met Office, we have technical expertise to every problem on Earth you care to name.

On Friday I visited the RNLI in my hometown of Portsmouth. As well as saving lives in the UK for nearly 190 years they have helped more than 30 nations around the world build services and systems that prevent drowning and rescue people.

It's a great partnership that they have. In return for building capacity in other nations they get to build capacity at home by learning new skills and creating new innovations.

And that can be said for so many other organisations, whether they sit in the private sector, the public sector or the third sector. Just think what we could achieve if we enabled all that our nation has to offer and put it behind the delivery of the Global Goals.

That's the aim of the Great Partnerships initiative, working out how we connect people, our discoveries, talents, skills and knowledge to the relevant problems and opportunities across the globe.

For example, there are currently legal professions in the UK that are helping to strengthen the rule of law in 17 developing countries.

Transform – a partnership between DFID and Unilever – is helping low income households.

The City of London has a Sustainable Development Capital Initiatives.

And there are Businesses Partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Innovate UK is linking up African and UK entrepreneurs.

And the RNLI themselves are tackling the 40 child drownings that occur every day in Bangladesh.

These partnerships are making a huge difference.

But I want to go further, methodically approaching the best of British organisations and inviting them to help. The Voluntary National Review is an opportunity to have those conversations.

And these partnerships need to bridge sectors.

We need to bring together public, private and third sector and unite them in one mission.

Maximising what we each have to offer and helping others to do more.

And we need to think more about our planning cycles – how we can support you in what you want to get done, and how can you help us to things that would otherwise be impossible.

Your annual planning could involve a conversation with me and government. And our plans for the up and coming Spending Review need to involve you.

And Government's planning cycles need to understand the insights and objectives of the specialists in this room today.

How can we co-fund?

How can we raise more money?

How can we drive reform?

How do we create a true national team behind the Global Goals?

The Government's aid budget is only part of our offer. Government has huge convening power and can help connect a wider set of partners.

Public funds should be limited to what only they can fund, and we should, in all but the most exceptional situations, have co-funders.

The bulk of the UK charity sector income – nearly two-thirds – doesn't receive any public funding.

And the largest players can receive sometimes just 40% of their income from individual donations, and rising up to 75% for some.

I have always believed the sector is stronger the less reliant it is on statutory funding, and I know that those organisations are greatly valued by

the British public.

So, part of our role at DFID should be to help you create opportunities so you can forge even more partnerships.

I'm writing to hundreds of British organisations inviting them into DFID to be part of that team.

I know that many of you already have Great Partnerships with public and private organisations and I want us to make them even more wider and stronger, incorporating the full breadth of what the United Kingdom has to offer.

And my department's relationship with you should be more than commissioner or contractor. We should be a catalyst to Great Partnerships.

I think that creating strong connections, between people, and between organisations across the world is one of the ways we can create enduring impact.

And you'll be hearing much more about Great Partnerships in the future. And if we are to do this well, then DFID's offer to and engagement with small charities must increase.

It is often small organisations that are the most innovative, the nimblest, and who create the strongest connections.

And there is some amazing work going on.

Interburns, a charity in Wales, is partnering with the Ethiopian government to implement a national strategy to prevent and treat burns – one of the leading causes of disability among Ethiopian children.

Meanwhile P.H.O.E.B.E., which is based in Ipswich, is setting up a recovery college in Zimbabwe to help 1,500 women with mental health issues.

In every community across the UK there are amazing people inventing new ways to solve problems and improve lives. And as I travel around the nation I see pictures of development projects on the walls of offices, pubs, schools, community centres and places of worship.

I think there is great strength in helping those Britons connect with the rest of the world and enabling hundreds of smaller organisations, many community-based, that make up the lion's share of the UK's international charity action, helping those organisations to achieve their ambitions.

We have already piloted a small charities fund and this summer we will be launching an improved Fund in full. It will be nimbler, easier to apply to, open, and have a rolling application process.

And I'm so confident in the merits of such a course, that we will commit to expand the fund to meet demand. There will be no cap. If you meet the grade, if you represent the best of British, you will have the funds you need to

deliver the global goals.

And I want every community in the UK to be able to establish that connection and show the world what Britain is about, and a larger share of my budget in future will go to those small charities who do so much with small sums.

And a major part of that is humanitarian organisations.

So DFID will make it easier for small, innovative organisations doing heroic work to respond to global disasters by becoming the first government to provide funding – over £3 million – through the H2H network.

We've world class organisations, specialist in things like mapping and translation. The services they supply can often mean the difference between life and death.

This funding will help them get on the ground more quickly and support the delivery of life-saving aid on the frontline.

After disaster strikes, every minute counts. The services that these specialist, often British, organisations provide play a critical role in improving the quality of the international community's response to humanitarian crises.

I also want to make it easier for the UK public to support the Global Goals – by donating or investing in causes that matter to them.

Many people in the UK want to invest their money and make every day financial transactions in a way which has a social and environmental impact.

Technology is a key element of this. Simple, readily accessible tools like apps will encourage and enable people to support causes they care passionately about.

And we've got great organisations like Global Giving, who are using tech to make connections between people, and of course there is the Charities Aid Foundation, who make it easier for individuals to give. And we already have more and more people investing in social enterprises and businesses that make a positive change in the world.

But I want to go further.

I want to make it easier for people to help you achieve the Global Goals. As you know we are undertaking a major piece of work to close the annual \$2.5 trillion funding gap to achieve them.

We are running a nationwide survey and events to learn about how people want to make a difference.

And as well as the general public we are working with investors, pension funds, banking and financial services, but we also want to engage the philanthropic sector too, to put the goals at the heart of good work to change the world, and work more closely with high value donors who want to

make lasting change, and maximise the use of technology to bring people together, those with resource, those with the expertise, those with the reach, to get things done.

And that will increase opportunities for you too: to cut down on the leg work to find those enabling people.

And on a practical level, in response to your feedback, we are also making changes at DFID: shortening funding timescales and when we do fund ensuring we pay full costs, promoting greater transparency, and making our funding more predictable.

We will provide real, practical support and help to you to help you fulfil your potential.

And we understand how critical an open, and inclusive and vibrant civil society is to what we are trying to get done.

I will renew UK leadership to tackle this issue, ensuring that my department delivers on the commitments of our new Governance Position Paper, which I am pleased to launch today. We will be vocal advocates of democratic norms and values throughout the world.

And to that end, I can announce new funding under UK Aid Connect. A programme led by Article 19 will develop new ways of arresting the closure of civic space; encouraging an independent media and civil society; and improving data, transparency, and accountability specifically in Burma, in Kenya and Malawi.

We will continue to use our diplomatic influence to provide support to southern-based CSOs in a way that shifts the power to the people in the countries where we provide aid. That is the only way to create a healthy ecosystem for civil society to develop abroad.

And where NGOs face difficulties we will be there to provide advocacy and practical help. Whether it be in Pakistan, where I recently lobbied their Prime Minister in person to ensure NGO regulation was transparent, or closer to home where we have committed to underwrite British humanitarian NGO's contracts with the EU to enable them to continue to bid for funding.

And we are glad to do this, because we need to keep you strong.

And we need to help the sector to continue to reform and improve its effectiveness.

By deepening how we work together, and create more partnerships to enable others to help too.

By increasing funds for smaller operators in the sector.

By enabling the UK's incredible humanitarian organisations, the public support so wholeheartedly.

And by enabling our values, of freedom, democracy and equality to be upheld.

Together we must work to deliver the Global Goals and to continue the reforms our governance and operating models to meet the expectations of the British public.

You and I are only here because of them.

Theirs' is the last word.

And their support is all.

I want you all to feel the full might of the United Kingdom behind you...

Through more great partnerships.

Through connections and opportunities.

Through more support for every single part of the UK charity sector.

Through connections between the heart of every community in the UK across the world.

And through new ways to protect your counterparts.

Through the pride of the British people.

And the results will speak for themselves.

But these initiatives and structures will only deliver trust in you if trust in the sector is high.

So please, always, hold those three principles that I spoke of a year ago:

For those we serve;

For those that enable us to;

And for the values of our great nation.

Thank you.