

Press release: Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Tajikistan



Mr Matthew Lawson has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan.

Mr Matthew Lawson has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan in succession to Mr Hugh Philpott OBE who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Lawson will take up his appointment during June 2019.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Matthew Richard Ambrose Lawson

2018 to present Full time language training (Russian & Tajik)
2015 to 2018 Sarajevo, Deputy Head of Mission
2013 to 2015 Ottawa, Head of Global Issues Group
2011 to 2013 FC0, Joint Head of Policy Unit
2009 to 2011 FC0, Head of Pakistan Team, South Asia Group
2008 to 2009 Full time language training (Russian)
2007 to 2008 Political Adviser to the High Representative/EU Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina
2005 to 2007 Banja Luka, Head of British Embassy Office
2004 to 2005 Full time language training (Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian)
2003 to 2004 FC0, Desk Officer, Afghanistan Team
2002 to 2003 Department for International Development, Deputy Programme Manager, Afghanistan Team
2001 to 2002 Her Majesty's Treasury, Policy Analyst

Further information

Published 16 January 2019

[News story: Updated Information Statement on Food Allergy issued by IFST](#)



Most commonly allergenic foods

[Dr Michael Walker](#) and Dr Hazel Gowland of Allergy Action, and research collaborator of the Government Chemist, refreshed the Information Statement (IS) on Food Allergy, pending a full review. The [Information Statement](#) describes the nature of food allergies, outlines legislation that aims to help people with allergies and to emphasises the measures that manufacturers and caterers should take to minimise the problems.

Developed and peer-reviewed through the IFST Scientific Committee, of which Hazel and Michael are members, Information Statements outline the latest scientific developments, as well as regulation and other relevant information, surrounding matters of topical importance within food science and technology into one single document.

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[News story: Robots tackle Sellafield's notorious radioactive 'hot spot'](#)

The radioactive 'hotspot', known to those at the site as 'D-Bay', is a sub-section of the First Generation Magnox Storage Pond.

The area was used to deposit radioactive sludge which started to accumulate

in the plant in the 1970s.

The sludge is now being carefully 'hoovered up' using robotic arms, following 10 years of planning with supply chain partners ACKtiv joint venture and Jacobs.

[Robots removing sludge from D Bay](#)

Head of Legacy Ponds for Sellafield Ltd, Dorothy Gradden, said:

D-Bay has always been one of our biggest headaches at Sellafield.

It is a concentration of a problem in our most complicated and hazardous legacy facility.

After years of designing, making and installing the necessary equipment, we are now delighted to be safely reducing the hazard day by day.

The dedication and innovative thinking of more than 800 people at Sellafield and in our supply chain that has ensured that we safely arrived at this 'man on the moon' moment for this plant.

I'd like to thank and congratulate them all.

D-bay holds the equivalent of 35 concrete mixer trucks full of radioactive sludge, which is a by-product formed from decaying nuclear fuel and other debris.

It has been a no-go area for around 40 years, due to the proximity of the sludge to the surface of the water and the sheer volume of radioactive material.

The work has been done remotely using 'Brokk' manipulator robots, operated by people who control them from behind a shielded wall.

The robotic arms are attached to an overhead travelling crane and various tools can be attached to the arm for different tasks.

A suction device is used to 'hoover' up the sludge, while other tools allow the arm to pick up larger waste items and chop them into smaller pieces (referred to by operators as 'giving a haircut'), so that the sludge can be accessed more easily.

The material is being transferred to a state-of-the-art plant for safe storage.

Now 66 years old, the pond was originally used to store, cool and prepare magnox fuel for reprocessing.

It is now one of the 4 legacy ponds and silos at Sellafield that the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority has prioritised for clean-up.

D-Bay is one of the plant's 'wet bays', which were separate areas designed for removing the cladding on nuclear fuel rods.

Work is ongoing to remove waste from the main pond, which is due to be emptied by 2031.

[News story: New Chair of Audit Risk at the Coal Authority appointed](#)



This appointment takes effect from from 1 April 2019 and lasts for 3 years.

The Coal Authority works to resolve the impacts of mining.

Jayne is a partner in Scott Ross Partnership. She was appointed a Non-executive Board Member and Chair of Audit Committee of the Marine Management Organisation in 2010. Currently she is a member of the Consumer Challenge Board for Heathrow's Price Review and The Private Healthcare Information Network. Previously she was a Panel Member of Scotland Office and Office of the Advocate General, Ofgem and CMA.

Published 16 January 2019

[Speech: Penny Mordaunt launches Companies to Inspire Africa 2019](#)

Well good morning everyone, and can I first start by echoing the sympathies that David gave about those caught up in the very sad events in Nairobi, my thoughts, the thoughts of my departmental colleagues and my parliamentary colleagues, I know [Andrew Selous](#) is here to today, are very much with

everyone who has been caught up in those tragic events.

After the events of last night in the House of Commons, which were rather depressing, I felt it was very important that I did something this morning that was uplifting, constructive with inspirational people and of which we could be very proud, and represented absolutely Global Britain. So, thank you David and the [London Stock Exchange Group](#) for inviting me to launch the Companies to Inspire Africa 2019 report.

I would like to start by congratulating all the companies featured. From 32 countries, with 7 major sectors represented, you have been nominated as Africa's most inspiring small and medium-sized enterprises. It is you and your successes that will demonstrate globally the opportunities that are increasingly present in Africa.

I am particularly pleased that nearly a quarter of the companies in this year's report are led by women, almost double that of the report published in 2017.

And we know that globally companies with greater levels of gender equality also do better in terms of income, growth and competitiveness. And today I have had the pleasure of meeting many of the inspirational female business leaders named in the report. Companies like [Lioness of Africa](#), which aims to support 1 million African women entrepreneurs to achieve success. As female leaders you are role models that can make change happen. I applaud and admire you all.

All of us in this room know Africa is a continent alive with opportunity. Five of the world's fastest-growing economies are African and by 2050, a quarter of the world's consumers will live there. This opportunity is why we saw Ghana hosting an Investment Summit last year, attended by over 50 British companies. It is why the London Stock Exchange has partnered with African Securities Exchanges like Casablanca and Nairobi. And it is why the Prime Minister recently visited the continent spending her time with business and political leaders, entrepreneurs and young people as well as throwing a few shapes – there's still time David, there's still time.

They told her that they wanted a modern partnership with the UK that delivers mutual benefit. By combining African-led ambition with British expertise we can do just that – unlocking high-quality investment that delivers more opportunities, exports and jobs for both Africa and the UK.

Global Britain is committed to this new partnership with Africa. The Prime Minister announced a radical expansion of the UK government's presence, bringing in trade experts and investment specialists to deliver on our shared interests and find solutions to the world's biggest challenges.

And later this year the UK will host the UK-Africa Investment Summit, which will bring together key government and business people from the UK and Africa to strengthen our links and make the most of the fantastic opportunities that are there. We want companies like you to play your part in the Summit to make it a game-changer for investment in Africa.

We want to leverage the UK's reach and unique value of the City of London to make the UK Africa's finance partner of choice.

The London Stock Exchange Group has shown strong partnership and leadership in this area, helping to build Global Britain. Through its [Africa Advisory Group](#), the London Stock Exchange has brought together key business leaders, policymakers and investors from across Africa to take the steps needed to develop Africa's capital markets. We look forward to working closely with the Group this year.

Developing Africa's capital markets is essential for unlocking finance for infrastructure and investment that will support job creation and economic growth in the long term. But these capital markets need to be supported by a well-regulated financial sector.

When I was at the London Stock Exchange during the [Commonwealth Summit](#) last April I announced a new DFID partnership with the Bank of England and the central banks of Ghana, South Africa and Sierra Leone to share regulatory expertise and enhance financial stability, helping promote economic growth through increased investor confidence. We will continue to scale up our work with the Bank of England throughout the course of this year.

UK aid is mobilising the private investment needed to deliver the [Global Goals](<https://www.globalgoals.org/>) and that is why [CDC](#), the UK's Development Finance Institution, has committed up to £3.5 billion of new African investments, and why up to £300 million has been committed from the Private Infrastructure Development Group. These partnerships will lay the foundations for new trading and business opportunities.

And when I was last here I announced the UK's ambition to help African countries raise debt in their local currencies. In November we celebrated the first ever Ghanaian Cedi-denominated bond to list to London, made possible through the DFID-backed [Private Infrastructure Development Group](#).

Investments by the DFID-backed [Financial Sector Deepening Africa](#) has supported 38 local currency bond issues by private companies and financial institutions in 16 African countries, in a range of sectors such as agriculture, energy, housing, microfinance and infrastructure. Local currency finance listings such as these are contributing to increased financial stability by ensuring that growth is fuelled by lower-risk finance over the long-term.

And we are committed to supporting innovative African companies to make it easier for finance to flow into and across the continent. It is estimated that US\$66 billion in remittances flow into Africa annually, with approximately 10% originating in the UK. The transfer of money by foreign workers to their families in their home countries is a lifeline to many in Africa. But many are losing their hard-earned money to too high remittance fees.

That is why we are announcing £2 million investment for [MFS Africa](#), an innovative mobile money company that makes it easier and cheaper to send

remittances to and across Africa. This is a clear example of the UK honouring its commitments to the G20 and Global Goals targets of reducing those costs.

Our investments and partnerships are already bringing benefits for both Africa and the UK. The CDC-backed company, [Blue Skies](#), features in the report and is a leading producer of fresh cut fruits and juices and is the largest private sector company in Ghana. It sells its produce across Africa, and also trades with UK supermarkets. You can find Blue Skies products in Sainsburys, Waitrose and on Amazon Fresh – a clear demonstration that investing in African companies is good for Africa and it is good for Britain too.

The UK values such partnerships. We bring the technical knowledge of our professionals, and we bring the values of a compassionate global nation. Our values sit at the heart of our aid spending.

In October I announced a new campaign to find out the appetite of British people who might want their savings or their pension to be used to support the Global Goals and to potentially deliver better returns for them. Over the coming months we will be speaking to financial institutions, savers, pension holders and the wider British public to help shape new investment products to deliver the Global Goals.

This report demonstrates that great partnerships can lead to great things. Working together, the UK and Africa can generate private sector investment, which in turn is creating business and investment opportunities for both Africa and the UK.

2019 is the year of significant opportunities to take those partnerships further – and I very much look forward to seeing the results. Thank you all very much.