

[News story: The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund opens its procurement framework for retender](#)



The new Framework will be in place by autumn 2018. It will have a broad range of suppliers who are able to meet the requirements of delivering a wide variety of CSSF programmes to support National Security Council priorities and objectives.

To be considered for the Framework, suppliers should have experience of working with government departments, other major international or national organisations or host Governments, in countries with fragile governments and infrastructure and/or are affected by conflict. Regions where the CSSF works include:

- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Europe and Central Asia
- Middle East and North Africa
- South America
- South Asia
- South East Asia
- UK Overseas Territories

MS Powerpoint Presentation, 37.3KB

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Find out more information about the retender on the [Bravo](#) site.

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Speech: The UK's trading partnership with Hungary

It is a great pleasure to be here in Budapest, at the Hotel Aquincum.

I first came to this great city in 1986, as a student at Cambridge University. I remember my visit with great affection: I had spent the previous few weeks in East Berlin and Prague, so arriving in an ever-so-slightly more liberal Budapest was quite a relief.

And I remember the strong feelings against Communism, and against Soviet domination in particular. And I am proud of the role Britain has played since in supporting democracy and free markets in Hungary.

I was one of the first western European business people to come to Hungary – in 1990 – to do business, and remember well the independent and entrepreneurial spirit of the Hungarian people then, as well.

Moving to the present day – before, during and after Brexit, the UK will stand by Hungary.

I would like to extend my thanks to our host, the Széll Kálmán Foundation, for the opportunity to speak to you about trade policy in the context of the UK's exit from the European Union.

The UK and Hungary's bilateral relationship

Today, the UK – Hungary bilateral relationship is stronger than ever. Hungary is a close friend to the UK – culturally, with shared values of trade, science and innovation and defence cooperation. Our bilateral relationship will endure long after we have left the EU.

Many Hungarians have come to study and work in the UK since your country joined the EU. My optician is Hungarian. The wife of one of my best friends in Parliament, David Davies MP, is Hungarian. They are just 2 of the 250,000 Hungarians in the UK, who we greatly value. I have heard London could be Hungary's second biggest city after Budapest! Hungarians have made valuable contributions and we want this to continue.

We also want to continue to deepen bilateral ties, and you may know that our embassy recently moved into a bigger building to accommodate a 30% increase in staff here in Budapest.

We have strong economic ties. The UK is currently the sixth largest foreign investor in Hungary and indeed Tesco is Hungary's largest private sector employer, with 20,000 employees, and sources their products from 1,650 Hungarian small and medium sized suppliers.

Our economic relationship extends across a wide range of sectors including telecommunications, electrical machinery, pharma and manufactured goods, making Hungary the UK's third largest export market in Central and Eastern Europe. Hungary's exports to the UK have almost trebled since 2000.

With such close bilateral economic ties, there is no appetite for increased market barriers on either side.

I hope that over the next weeks, months and years, we can continue to work closely with our Hungarian friends and allies.

The UK's future economic partnership with the EU

We want an economic partnership with the European Union that delivers the maximum possible benefits for both our economies whilst respecting the integrity of each other's institutions and autonomy.

We start from a unique position – on day one we will have exactly the same rules and regulations. We are looking for a new trading agreement that reflects the reality of this shared starting point.

Many of our sectors are closely interconnected. The complexity and integration of supply chains, across the UK and EU, show the importance of ensuring cross-border trade is as free and frictionless as possible.

Our future economic partnership should cover both goods and services – they are often intertwined. The fewer the restrictions, the greater the benefit to businesses, consumers and services providers, on both sides. This will not add up to Single Market membership – we are looking for something different. We understand you cannot have all the benefits of membership of the Single Market, without its obligations.

Our shared goal should be to find a new balance of rights and obligations that reflect the scale and breadth of our close ties. We will need a common set of standards and principles to underpin our new partnership. This is a requirement for any free trade agreement and our future partnership will be no different. Our proposal is ambitious and creative.

It is in both the EU's and the UK's interests to maximise shared prosperity and minimise disruption, while respecting the integrity of the Single Market.

Overnight, on Brexit day, the UK will become almost the largest external trading partner of the EU, second only to the USA – bigger than China, India or Japan. We will be the largest non-EU partner for Hungary itself.

The EU is currently seeking free trade agreements with Mercosur, Australia and New Zealand – it would be absurd not to seek one with the UK.

The EU has a variety of different relationships. But none of the present ones would be appropriate for the UK's future relationship, or in the mutual interests of each side. Joining the EEA would represent too much of a loss of democratic control for the UK, while a Canadian-style deal would offer too

low a level of market access.

We can do so much better. European interlocutors, including Michel Barnier, have recognised we will need a deal that reflects “the specificities” of the UK’s relationship with the EU. We are optimistic about the discussions ahead.

The Department for International Trade

The particular responsibility of the Department for International Trade is to support UK businesses to export and invest in Europe and other regions of the world, to support them with the finance to do so, and to lead on trade policy – through the EU whilst we are still members, and in setting our future trade policy (my particular role).

We are still actively participating in the making of EU trade policy. I represent the UK at EU meetings of trade ministers, the next one being held in Sofia at the start of next week. We are fully supportive of and engaged in the EU’s liberal trade agenda, where particular priorities at the moment are trade agreements with Mexico and Mercosur, and signing the trade agreement with Japan.

I participated in the [11th WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires](#) in December, and my department is now working hard to maintain ambition at the WTO, advancing discussions on digital trade, domestic regulation in services, investment facilitation, and micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The UK’s future independent trade policy

My department has also set out this government’s vision for our future independent trade policy last year. The initial thrust of this policy is to provide continuity for business and consumers.

This includes ensuring that UK and EU businesses and consumers can continue to trade freely, as part of a new deep and special partnership. For example, we intend to transition all existing EU free trade agreements, potentially including the EU-Japan Trade Agreement concluded in December. As the UK exits the EU, we will work quickly to establish a new economic partnership between the UK and Japan based on the final terms of the agreement.

To ensure continuity, we are preparing the necessary schedules that replicate as far as possible our current tariff obligations. We will join the [WTO’s Agreement on Government Procurement](#) (GPA) as an independent member, maintaining current guaranteed access to global procurement opportunities and offering value for money.

More broadly, we aim to ensure economic prosperity for our businesses, workers and consumers, who often have ties to the continent, too. We support a fair and proportionate rules-based system, for trade at home and internationally. We will also stand for a trading framework that supports foreign, domestic, sustainability, security, environmental and development

goals.

Our future independent trade policy will also seek to boost our trade relationships with old friends and new allies. Here, we will seek to increase access for exports, further liberalise the services sector and digital trade, whilst ensuring a high level of protection for consumers, the environment, employees and public services.

However, free trade does not mean trade without rules. We also prepare for a trade remedies framework to protect domestic industry against unfair practices or surges.

Of course we are developing our future independent trade policy in the context of EU exit. We would not bring into effect arrangements that are not consistent with the terms of an implementation period.

In conclusion, before I open the floor for your questions, let me reiterate how important it is to me to listen to your views, concerns and hear about the opportunities you see.

As I said, our future independent trade policy puts continuity for business and consumers first. Britain and Hungary are great friends. I hope we can count on your support.

[Press release: Find out about the latest plans to reduce flood risk in Otley](#)

Visitors to the drop in will have an opportunity to see how feedback from the last event in October has helped to shape options for flood alleviation scheme for Otley.

A review of the digital model of the river is now complete, and the testing of options in the model has begun, so the team would now like to share the findings from the work and get feedback for the next steps.

Representatives from Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and WSP (the consultants undertaking survey and investigation work) will be at the event to answer any questions and discuss the latest progress.

The drop in will be held at:

- The Core Otley, Unit 11 Orchard Gate, Otley LS21 3NX on Thursday 1 March between 4–7pm

The town suffered flooding on three occasions between November and December

2015, which saw 74 properties affected. In the Autumn Statement 2016, Government announced £2 million to invest in a scheme to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses.

The scheme is being led by Leeds City Council working closely with the Environment Agency.

Leader of Leeds City Council Councillor Judith Blake said:

Together with our partners we are continuing to make good progress on our plans for flood prevention measures in Otley. The modelling work on the river is finished and we are now testing the possible options. We want local residents and businesses to be as involved as possible in these plans as they develop, so would encourage people to go along to the drop-in session, find out more and give us their views.

John Woods, flood risk management advisor at the Environment Agency said:

We're grateful to everyone who came along to the last event in October to give us your views and ideas. We have looked at these in detail with Leeds City Council's engineers and consultants WSP and have tested a number of them in the digital model to assess their impact on flooding. Residents views are once again really important in helping us to shape the preferred option for Otley.

Work to pull together data to better understand the potential paths of flood water as well as collating historic and recent flood information began last year. The information from these investigations, carried out by consultants, WSP, has been used to update an existing digital model of the River Wharfe which has helped to form potential options for a scheme, which are now being tested.

The Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme is one of several schemes that is adopting a catchment-wide approach. This means the entire River Wharfe catchment area will be considered to help reduce flood risk. This approach looks at a combination of natural processes and engineered options to help slow the flow and catch water further up the catchment so that flood peaks are reduced further downstream.

For those who can't make it to the drop-in, members of the project team will be working regularly from Otley Town Council's office, and can be contacted on 01943 466335 or call in for a chat between these times: Tuesday 13th March 3pm – 6pm, Wednesday 11th April 3 – 6pm.

News story: New partnership with UK charities to tackle global challenges

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt speaking at the annual Bond conference

The UK is partnering with Bond – the leading network of over 400 international development organisations – to create innovative solutions to the global challenges we face by working more closely with banks, tech companies and research bodies, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt announced yesterday.

This new partnership – part of a wider programme called UK Aid Connect – will also encourage a range of British charities to work collaboratively, share resources and bring together knowledge, practice and expertise for solutions to some of the most difficult development problems in a rapidly changing and complex world. This includes encouraging cutting-edge technology to drive the changes needed to navigate the uncertain future ahead.

This comes alongside Ms Mordaunt's calls for the charity sector to have "the will to change". She said "to deliver on the promises we've made to the world's poorest, business as usual isn't going to cut it", pushing them to be more transparent, open and accountable.

[Speaking at the Bond Conference](#), the International Development Secretary said:

We know that on current trajectories, achieving the Global Goals – which we talk about and show our commitment to in the pin badges we wear – is simply out of reach. The facts speak for themselves – and the many we are letting down. If we want those facts to change we have to change what we do.

The challenge of the global goals is to leave nobody behind and civil society organisations have an essential role in enabling us to find and support the marginalised. It is only through charities that we will be able to hear the voice of the people we are there to serve and I want to strengthen the role that civil society organisations can play.

We need the humility to recognise what others can bring will multiply our efforts. And we need to let many others help.

It will require us to change where we work and who we work with, it will require more sharing of data and greater cooperation.

As part of UK Aid Connect, DFID is providing grants until 2021 to a diverse range of organisations to address the key development challenges in selected priority areas such as disability, child labour, modern slavery and working towards global security and stability. Today's announcement includes £4million to Bond.

DFID is also working closely with Bond to design a programme of support for civil society organisations to strengthen their processes to ensure that the highest standards of transparency and safeguarding procedures are in place to protect vulnerable people.

Press release: Foreign Secretary orders plastic to be binned from Britain's diplomatic network

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) will eliminate avoidable single-use plastics from its UK operations by the end of the year, and from its global operations by 2020. It is the first UK government department to announce such a ban.

This ambitious target makes the FCO a leader in the fight against plastic pollution not just in the UK, but globally too.

In recent weeks, the FCO has already removed all plastic cups, crockery, cutlery, straws and single-use condiment sachets from its London staff canteen, and is providing re-usable or biodegradable alternatives.

It plans to increase its "latte levy" from 10p to 50p to encourage staff to use their own mugs instead of disposable ones – and places the FCO firmly at the top of the pack in taking real action to end plastic waste.

The Foreign Secretary has set a deadline of year-end 2018 for the FCO to find alternatives to the remaining avoidable single-use plastics in use in its UK estate.

As well as a ban by year-end in the UK, the Foreign Secretary has given a 2020 target for its overseas estate, with a significant reduction this year.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

It is time for the world to truly wake up to the damage being done

to the environment, and especially by the sheer volume of plastic that is dumped in our oceans.

If the UK is to turn the tide overseas on this crucial issue, it is only right that the Foreign Office leads the way at home.

Sir Simon McDonald, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office said:

Since 2009/10, the Foreign Office has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 39%, waste by 45%, paper consumption by 42% and water use by 12.9m litres in our UK operations. But we must do more to reduce our use of plastic. I am confident we can meet the challenge put to us by the Foreign Secretary.

In addition, the FCO is looking at how it can further reduce its environmental impact beyond plastic. Projects identified for consideration include replacing existing vehicles with electric hybrid vehicles, waste to energy projects, and a global automated energy monitoring and reduction programme.

The drive comes on the back of the launch of the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan last month, which set out measures to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042 across the whole of the UK.

Notes to editors

The drive comes on the back of the launch of the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan last month, which set out measures to reduce plastic waste.

The FCO already has a strong record in sustainability. Its most recent [annual sustainability report](#) show that in 2016/17 in its UK operations the FCO:

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 39%
- Reduced water consumption by 12.9m litres
- Reduced waste & recycling produced by 45%
- Reduced paper consumption by 42%

In recognition of these efforts, we were shortlisted as a finalist in the British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM) Awards 2017 for its actions to drive significant reductions in water and energy use across the UK estate – the first central government department to achieve this success in the 16 years the awards have been running.

Estimates of the amount of avoidable single-use plastics in the FCO include:

- 103,201 cold drinks bottles purchased by the FCO in the UK in 2017 (stretching from FCO HQ to Heathrow Airport)
- 655,718 hot beverage cups purchased by the FCO in the UK in 2017 (FCO HQ to Milton Keynes / Brighton)

- 285,600 plastic water cups purchased by the FCO in the UK in 2017
- 14,950 pieces of plastic cutlery purchased by the FCO in the UK in 2017
- 1.37m avoidable single-use plastic items were used purchased by the FCO in the UK in 2017
- Initial estimates suggest that the FCO globally is consuming at least 3.45m items of avoidable single-use plastics.

Further information