

# **News story: Announcement of the UK Independent Member of the Fundamental Rights Agency**

Charles Banner has been appointed as the UK Independent Member of the Management Board of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) from 25 September 2017 to 31 July 2022. However, the term of office but may be truncated at the point when the United Kingdom ceases to be a Member of the European Union.

The Agency provides European Union institutions with assistance and expertise on fundamental rights in liaison with the Council of Europe as well as other international human rights organisations. It is also empowered to provide assistance and guidance to Member States but only when they are implementing Union law.

The Management Board is composed of one independent person appointed by each Member State, one independent person appointed by the Council of Europe and two representatives of the European Commission.

Members of the Management Board of the FRA are appointed by the Secretary of State and are not regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

## **Biography**

Charles Banner was called to the Bar of England & Wales in 2004 and to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 2010. He practices across both jurisdictions as well as internationally, based at Landmark Chambers in London. His practice principally falls within two sectors: (i) Urban development, infrastructure and energy, and (ii) Government and regulation. EU law and human rights feature heavily in his work and he has appeared in several cases before the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights. He is co-founder and Deputy Head of Landmark International (the international brand of Landmark Chambers), a Council Member of the UK Environmental Law Association and (with effect from April 2018) an Independent Non-Executive Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' UK and Ireland Regulatory Sub-Board.

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# **Press release: PM announces landmark new package of defence and security**

## cooperation with Poland

The Prime Minister will travel to Warsaw today for an annual summit designed to strengthen the relationship between the UK and Poland as Britain prepares to leave the EU.

The UK-Poland bilateral summit will bring together both Prime Ministers along with a number of senior Cabinet ministers, including the Chancellor, Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Home Secretary and Business Secretary.

As an integral part of the summit, the Prime Minister is expected to announce a new joint UK-Poland Treaty on Defence and Security Co-operation. The only other European Union country we have such a treaty with is France.

It will provide a framework for defence cooperation on areas such as training, exercises, information sharing, defence industry cooperation and capability development, building on the deployment of British troops to Poland under Enhanced Forward Presence following the last UK-Poland summit held in London in November 2016.

The Prime Minister is also set to agree improved UK-Poland cooperation to counter Russian disinformation in the region, including through new joint strategic communications projects. The UK will provide £5 million for the projects, with Poland expected to contribute a similar amount. The projects will aim to build both of our capacities to detect and counter Russian information operations, and deliver valuable support to Belsat, a Polish-funded TV channel providing unbiased, free and frank reporting for Belarussians.

And she will announce that we will enhance our cyber security cooperation with Poland, including by hosting a Polish cyber delegation at our National Cyber Security Centre in March next year to share the UK's world-leading expertise and best practice in this area.

Speaking ahead of the summit, the Prime Minister said:

Poland matters greatly to the UK: our partnership is broad, vibrant and diverse and we both share a steadfast commitment to Europe's security and defence.

I am determined that Brexit will not weaken our relationship with Poland. Rather, it will serve as a catalyst to strengthen it.

And that is why I am in Warsaw today, to ensure that we can work even more closely together to ensure the security and prosperity of our nations in the years ahead.

Although the UK is leaving the European Union, we are not leaving Europe. And I will reaffirm to Prime Minister Morawiecki that we want to work with Poland and the other member states in the future

to protect our shared values, people and interests.

We are building a strategic partnership from a base of shared history and deep ties of friendship that will continue to flourish long after our departure from the EU.

The bilateral defence treaty we are signing today is a powerful symbol of our continued close cooperation.

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## News story: CoRWM plenary meeting dates and locations 2018

CoRWM open plenary meetings in 2018 will be held on the following dates. Each plenary session will end with questions from the public and an opportunity to comment. All dates are subject to change; please check the website for updates to meeting dates and locations.

Date	Time	Location
10 January 2018	09:00	BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET
23 March 2018	11:30	BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET
2 May 2018	11:30	BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET
20 June 2018	11:30	Edinburgh – venue to be confirmed
26 September 2018	11:30	Cardiff – venue to be confirmed
14 November 2018	11:30	BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET

If you would like to attend any of the plenary meetings, please email [corwm@beis.gov.uk](mailto:corwm@beis.gov.uk) 2 weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

Please inform us of any access or other requirements that you have.

We are unfortunately unable to accommodate attends who have not registered in advance.

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## News story: Flood defence milestone: 100,000 more properties better protected

Better protecting communities from flooding continues to be a top priority for the government, the Environment Secretary Michael Gove will reaffirm today.

Flood defences continue to be built apace across England and 100,000 properties are now better protected thanks to the 350 new flood schemes that have been completed since April 2015.

The Environment Secretary is in Devon today to open a new £12 million flood defence scheme in Dawlish Warren, reducing flood risk to 2800 homes and businesses around the Exe Estuary, as well as the main rail line into South Devon and Cornwall.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Our £2.6 billion investment programme is well underway, with 100,000 more properties already better protected from flooding and that figure set to triple in under four years.

Dawlish Warren is only one of 350 new defences built since 2015 and work continues on schemes across the country – all of which are helping to bring peace of mind to communities, as well as investment and opportunities.

With elements including a new 100 metre long flood wall and over 200,000 cubic metres of sand, Dawlish Warren uses top engineering techniques and the natural landscape to reduce flood risk, while also conserving habitat for birds and wildlife.

As the Environment Secretary opens one flood scheme for Devon, he will simultaneously announce that work will begin next year on another £12 million scheme just across the estuary, in Exmouth. Both schemes are part of the government's continued £115 million investment drive to reduce flood risk to 15,000 homes and businesses in Devon and Cornwall by 2021.

On top of this existing funding, the Environment Secretary will announce an extra £1.6 million for Devon from the recent Budget: this will go towards two schemes, one in Plymouth and one in Whimple.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency said:

We have made great progress in the last two years to reduce flood

risk around the country and this milestone of 100,000 homes better protected shows how far we've come. These new schemes at Dawlish Warren and Exmouth are brilliant examples of how the Environment Agency's teams continue to work hard to benefit local communities.

In addition to building new defences, this winter we are better prepared than ever before to respond if flooding occurs with new equipment, better technology and more than 6,500 trained staff ready to act.

Following his visit to Dawlish Warren, the Environment Secretary will visit the Devon Wildlife Trust's trial reintroduction of beavers on the River Otter to see the visible impacts they have had on the landscape; creating new dams, pools and other dramatic changes.

The Environment Secretary's interest in the project follows the recent announcement that he is supportive of a planned similar scheme in the Forest of Dean, which has been granted a licence to proceed.

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## **Press release: PM calls with King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman: 20 December 2017**

The Prime Minister spoke to King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia earlier this evening.

She welcomed the decision by the Saudi-led Coalition to reopen the Yemeni port of Hodeidah and noted the arrival of UK staff in the region to assist with the UN inspection process, helping to speed up the distribution of much needed humanitarian and commercial supplies.

The Prime Minister strongly condemned yesterday's attempted missile attack on the Yamama Palace in Riyadh, and welcomed the restraint shown by Saudi Arabia in the face of unacceptable Houthi aggression.

She reiterated the UK's ongoing commitment to Saudi Arabia's security and our determination to push for stronger action through the UN to expose and counter Iran's destabilising activity in the region and to find a political solution to the conflict in Yemen.

Finally, the Prime Minister looked forward to welcoming the Crown Prince to the UK in the New Year.