

# Press release: Brokenshire in Brussels to meet key EU officials

The Secretary of State is in Brussels to continue his engagement with key stakeholders in between Brexit negotiation rounds. Mr Brokenshire will inform and update leading EU figures on the current political situation in Northern Ireland as well as emphasising the unique issues affecting NI as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The Secretary of State will meet Michel Barnier, the European Union's Chief Brexit Negotiator, and update him on talks to form an NI Executive and the remaining political challenges Northern Ireland faces in relation to exiting the EU.

He will also hold meetings with Sir Julian King, the British European Commissioner, to discuss the latest security developments in Northern Ireland, and Phil Hogan, the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, to discuss Northern Ireland's agricultural interests in view of Brexit.

The Secretary of State will use the opportunity to update MEPs, including those from across the island of Ireland, on talks to restore an Executive at Stormont and discuss the unique economic, social and political context of Northern Ireland in view of Brexit.

Speaking ahead of his visit, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

My visit to Brussels today comes at an important time. Negotiations are underway and we want to secure an agreement that delivers for all parts of the UK, including Northern Ireland. "As Secretary of State I am fully committed to ensuring that, as negotiations progress, the interests of Northern Ireland are protected and advanced, through the development of specific solutions to address its unique circumstances.

Of course it would be better if there were an Executive in place, with whom we could also engage directly, and that is why we are working to ensure the resumption of stable devolved government in Northern Ireland. I and my department will continue to advocate for Northern Ireland's interests and needs at the heart of Government.

We are going to make the most of the opportunities that our departure presents to Northern Ireland – getting out into the world and doing business right across the globe, while at home building a

UK that works for everyone.

As I have said previously, the UK Government fully recognises the shared history that exists between the people on the island of Ireland as well as between Ireland and Great Britain so maintaining the Common Travel Area and preserving the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreements are top priorities for us.

Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK to share a land border with an EU member state, and we recognise the flow of traffic across the border on a daily basis for people going about their daily business is essential as we move forward. There must be no physical infrastructure at the border.

I believe that specific solutions can be found to Northern Ireland's unique circumstances, and the UK Government will do all in its power to secure an outcome that works for all parts of the United Kingdom. I will be reinforcing this message during my discussions.

During a keynote speech Mr Brokenshire will tell members of the European Policy Centre, EU officials and the assembled media that Northern Ireland is immeasurably in a better place today than it was 20 years ago but we must continue to tackle the challenges of today. A full transcript of the Secretary of State's speech will be published upon delivery.

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## **Press release: Every part of Wales must flourish after Brexit**

UK Government Ministers Robin Walker and Alun Cairns will today (6 Nov) meet with a panel of Welsh businesses, universities and the voluntary and farming sectors in Cardiff as part of ongoing engagement on the opportunities and challenges of exiting the EU.

This meeting will follow an evidence session with the National Assembly for Wales where the ministers will answer questions on the EU Withdrawal Bill.

The visit is part of an ongoing programme of engagement with all parts of the UK on Brexit, and builds on recent visits to Wales by the First Secretary of State Damian Green, Environment Secretary Michael Gove and International

Trade Secretary Liam Fox.

**Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

As we continue to make decisive steps towards our exit from the EU, we are committed to bringing all of the UK with us – ensuring that every sector’s voice is heard and that every nation is able to flourish from day one of departure.

The people of Wales want to make Brexit a success and both the Welsh Government and UK Government want the same thing – we want Wales to prosper and we want an agreement for the whole of the UK with the European Union. As we leave the EU, Wales will share the benefits of the UK’s new role as a strong, global, free-trading nation.

That is why we are stepping up our engagement with key sectors in Wales throughout the exit process. I’m delighted to welcome Robin Walker to Cardiff today to continue those discussions.

**Minister at the Department for Exiting the EU, Robin Walker said:**

We are committed to securing a deal that works for the entire United Kingdom, enabling Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England to fully embrace the opportunities our EU exit offers.

As we continue our unprecedented level of engagement on Brexit, I look forward to hearing from key sectors in Wales about their priorities for Brexit and to updating them on negotiations and the progress of the Withdrawal Bill.

The Withdrawal Bill is a key piece of legislation in the national interest which will convert EU law to UK law on exit day, ensuring we leave the EU with certainty, continuity and control. The Bill will enter committee stage on November 14th.

The Secretary of State for Wales established the Expert Panel to work with him to deliver a smooth and orderly exit from the EU in Wales. The third meeting today builds on the constructive conversations they have already had, helping to contribute to the UK’s negotiating position.

**NOTES**

- The Ministers will be appearing in front of the National Assembly for Wales’ Constitutional and Legislative Committee and External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee.

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# [News story: Community rail stations of the future to be shaped by new blueprint for success](#)

A scheme which allows local communities to adopt under-used stations and rail lines is set to enter a new era under multi-million pound plans to be announced by the Rail Minister Paul Maynard today (6 November 2017).

Nearly 60 [Community Rail Partnerships](#) (CRPs) have been set up around the country since 1993, and have helped to revive and reshape more than 80 routes and stations, thanks to volunteers, community engagement and funding from the government and train operators, which last year topped £3 million.

## [The role and importance of community rail](#)

And now the Department for Transport plans to build on the success of the scheme by launching an updated community rail strategy – with millions of pounds of investment available for successful schemes. The plan is to see the scheme expanded and replicated on a wider scale across the country.

The most successful projects have seen passenger numbers boosted, while others have recreated railway stations as important community hubs.

Rail Minister Paul Maynard said:

We have seen nearly a quarter of a century of communities pulling together to breathe new life into railway lines and stations – and we want to build on that success.

We want give the volunteers the support they deserve, spread their success and encourage new partnerships to be created and flourish.

This forms a key part of the investment the government is making in the railways – the biggest since the Victorian era, delivering new carriages, new routes, track upgrades and better stations.

## [Rail Minister Paul Maynard invites you to have your say on the new community rail strategy](#)

The minister is launching a [consultation into how to expand and enhance community partnerships](#) today at one of the scheme's success stories, Burnley's Manchester Road station. Over the past year, the station has seen passenger numbers rise by more than 100,000.

The funding each partnership receives allows them to promote their station or

line in the local community and improve accessibility which has increased passenger footfall and helped to reduce vandalism.

More than 3,200 volunteers give 250,000 hours of their time every year to partnerships across the network.

The new strategy for England and Wales is the first since 2007, and will be launched in Spring next year following the end of the public consultation on 28 January 2018.

The consultation focuses on 4 themes

- connecting people to places and opportunities
- supporting communities, diversity and inclusion
- supporting local and regional economies
- suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), the national umbrella organisation for community rail, has also produced a [booklet setting out the benefits of community rail](#).

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## **[Press release: The Foreign Secretary condemns attempted missile attack on Riyadh](#)**

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

I am shocked and horrified by the attempted missile strike on Riyadh which was a deliberate targeting of a civilian area. The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting Saudi Arabia as it faces regional crises and security threats. We condemn in the strongest terms this attempted attack and the actions of those involved. British Nationals in Saudi Arabia should continue to follow FCO Travel Advice.

**Further information**

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# Press release: UK aid stops ‘untold horror’ of child pneumonia deaths in Syria this winter

International Development Secretary Priti Patel has announced a new package of UK aid support to help end the “untold horror” that means thousands of helpless Syrian children fall victim to the “brutal assault of winter” every year.

From November, temperatures typically plummet in Syria and as many as 1 in 3 child deaths could be caused by respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia – up from 1 in 10 before the crisis began.

Chest infections are now the number one reason for children in Syria seeking medical attention. UK aid will provide immunisations and give early treatment for coughs and colds, preventing children from suffering life-threatening illnesses and giving them hope for the future.

People living in tents and make-shift shelters in Syria do all they can to survive sub-zero temperatures but they are struggling to afford daily essentials, food and medical care. Dirty conditions increase the chances of chest infections and malnourishment makes children up to 15 times more likely to die from pneumonia.

As well as delivering life-saving medical support, UK aid is restoring large buildings so that people have a safe and clean place to stay for as long as they need, helping them now and in the winters to come. It is also providing more than 100,000 people with hot meals, warm clothes and blankets to stop children falling ill in the first place.

UK aid will:

- provide more than 1.3 million health care consultations, including 700,000 reproductive, maternal and child health care consultations to give children early treatment and prevent illnesses such as pneumonia.
- provide vaccinations for more than 100,000 people to help prevent infections and boost immune systems.
- support 102,500 people, including families living in besieged and hard to reach areas, with winter kits that include blankets, warm clothing and kitchen utensils to help cook hot meals.
- accommodate 3,000 people in secure shelters by restoring 600 housing units that are fitted with heaters, new doors and windows, and working amenities.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The barbaric conflict in Syria means that hundreds of thousands of vulnerable men, women and children face another deadly winter

ahead.

Pneumonia is an untold horror of the Syria crisis and helpless children are falling victim to the brutal assault of winter before their lives have properly begun. No child should die from the cold. As well as providing lifesaving vaccines and medical treatment, we're taking action to fortify buildings against sub-zero temperatures and prevent these needless deaths for winters to come.

I urge the international community to step up and provide support that will not only keep people alive but also give them a fighting chance of rebuilding their lives.

The brutal Syrian civil war has already cost an estimated 400,000 lives, with over 11 million people displaced by conflict and causing a severe shortage of food, clean water and healthcare.

Over half of Syria's population has been displaced by the violence, with nearly 3 million people in hard to reach locations. Today's UK aid package includes critical support delivered across international borders to people trapped in besieged areas in Syria.

Britain has been at the forefront of the response to the Syria crisis and already we have delivered 26.2 million food rations, 9.8 million relief packages, 8.3 million vaccines against deadly diseases and 10.4 million medical consultations for those in need.

#### Notes to Editors

1. Today's £62 million package is an allocation of support from the UK's response to the Syria crisis and will be provided to partners already working in Syria, including UN agencies.
2. This includes £15 million for UNICEF, £12 million for UNRWA, £7.2 million for the Danish Refugee Council, £6 million to the World Health Organisation and £21.8 million for other NGOs. For safety and security reasons, DFID does not name a number of our partners operating in Syria.
3. The UK is a leading donor in the humanitarian response. To date we have committed over £2.46 billion in funding to the region.
4. For more information on the UK's humanitarian response to the Syria crisis, visit:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/factsheet-the-uks-humanitarian-aid-response-to-the-syria-crisis>

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