

News story: Business Secretary meets with US Commerce Secretary

Business Secretary meets with US Commerce Secretary and US Ambassador to the UK.

Business Secretary Greg Clark met the US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and the US Ambassador to the UK, Robert Johnson this afternoon to discuss a wide range of key industry issues.

This included the recent partnership between Airbus and Bombardier which is hoped will lead to job creation in the US and security for the Bombardier plant in Belfast. It comes as Bombardier confirmed today it had had a significant new order for the C-Series.

Greg Clark raised Boeing's complaint about subsidies for Bombardier's C-Series aircraft programme to make it clear we want to see all parties come to a resolution as quickly as possible.

The Business Secretary also committed to continuing to work closely with the US to tackle overcapacity in the steel industry. The Prime Minister Theresa May called for a ministerial level meeting at the last gathering of G20 leaders in July to tackle the issue. This will take place later this month in Germany.

Greg Clark spoke of the continued importance of the close cultural and economic ties between the US and UK which has an important role to play in our modern Industrial Strategy and the ambitious long-term vision for the UK that will build on our strengths as a global trading nation.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

It was a constructive meeting. As well as continuing to make the case for Boeing to drop its complaint against Bombardier, today's new order for the C-Series planes highlights the opportunities to expand and safeguard jobs at the Shorts factory in Belfast. The US also agreed with us on the importance of combatting together the global overcapacity in the steel industry.

The US Commerce Secretary and I also discussed the UK's Industrial Strategy and the opportunities we should be exploiting as we build on our strengths and extend excellence into the future.

Speech: PM speech at Balfour Centenary Dinner

Lord Rothschild, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Chief Rabbi, distinguished guests, Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am so pleased to be here with you tonight – and to be with you Lord Balfour on this special evening – as we mark the centenary of the letter written by your great-Uncle: which I believe to be one of the most significant letters in history.

A letter which gave birth to a most extraordinary country.

And a letter which finally opened the door to helping make a Jewish homeland a reality.

It was a letter that is all the more remarkable when you consider its length, its context and its sensitivity.

First, it was exceptionally concise – just 67 words and one single sentence.

In my experience such brevity is not typically a feature of letters from the Foreign Office!

Second, we should consider the context in which this letter was written.

Let us cast our minds back to the time of 1917. In an era of competing imperial powers and with Britain still embroiled in the midst of the First World War, the idea of establishing a homeland for the Jewish people would have seemed a distant dream for many; and been fiercely opposed by others.

Yet it was at this very moment that Lord Balfour had the vision and the leadership to make this profound statement about restoring a persecuted people to a safe and secure homeland.

Third, this was a letter that remains very sensitive for many people today – but it was not ignorant of those sensitivities.

Indeed, Balfour wrote explicitly that: “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

So when some people suggest we should apologise for this letter, I say absolutely not.

We are proud of our pioneering role in the creation of the State of Israel.

We are proud to stand here today together with Prime Minister Netanyahu and declare our support for Israel. And we are proud of the relationship we have built with Israel.

And as we mark one hundred years since Balfour, we look forward to taking that relationship even further.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu and I discussed in Downing Street earlier today, we want to deepen our links in areas where Israel is leading the world – in areas like agriculture, health, science, technology and innovation.

Israel is the true start-up nation and we are proud to be your partner.

We also remain absolutely committed to Israel's security.

For it is only when you witness Israel's vulnerability that you truly understand the constant danger Israelis face – as I saw on my visit in 2014, when the bodies of the murdered teenagers Naftali Frenkel, Gilad Shaer and Eyal Yifrah were discovered.

So I am clear that we will always support Israel's right to defend itself.

And in a world where Britain and Israel increasingly face the same shared challenges and threats, I am just as clear that our security services will continue to deepen their already excellent co-operation to keep all our people safe.

So I believe we should gather here tonight with a great deal of pride in all that we have achieved – and all that Israel stands for as a symbol of openness, as a thriving democracy; and a beacon to the world in upholding the rights of women and members of the LGBT community.

But marking this centenary is not just about what has been achieved.

We must recognise how difficult at times this journey has been – from the Jews forced out of their homes in Arab countries in 1948 to the suffering of Palestinians affected and dislodged by Israel's birth – both completely contrary to the intention of Balfour to safeguard all of these communities.

And we must, I believe, seize this opportunity to renew our resolve on what is still to be achieved.

For sadly, Balfour remains unfinished business – as his fundamental vision of peaceful co-existence has not yet been fulfilled.

And I believe it demands of us today a renewed resolve to support a lasting peace that is in the interests of both Israelis and Palestinians – and in the interests of us all.

So I am delighted to see US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross here with us this evening and, Wilbur, you can be assured of the full-hearted support of the United Kingdom for the efforts that the Trump administration is making to bring the parties together to reach that peace deal.

A peace deal that must be based on a two-state solution, with a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State.

And let us be honest with each other: there will need to be compromises from each side if we are to have a realistic chance of achieving this goal – including an end to the building of new settlements and an end to Palestinian incitement too.

But as we work together towards Balfour's vision of a peaceful co-existence we must be equally clear that there can never be any excuses for boycotts, divestment or sanctions: they are unacceptable and this government will have no truck with those who subscribe to them.

Neither can there ever be any excuse for anti-Semitism in any form. Just as there is no excuse for hatred against Muslims, Christians, or anyone based on the peaceful religions they choose to follow, the place of their birth, or the colour of their skin.

And yes, this means recognising that there is today a new and pernicious form of anti-Semitism which uses criticism of the actions of the Israeli government as a despicable justification for questioning the very right of Israel to exist.

This is abhorrent and we will not stand for it.

That is why the United Kingdom has been at the forefront of an international effort to create a new definition of anti-Semitism which explicitly calls out this inexcusable attempt to justify hatred.

So let me be clear. Criticising the actions of Israel is never – and can never be – an excuse for questioning Israel's right to exist, any more than criticising the actions of Britain could be an excuse for questioning our right to exist.

And criticising the government of Israel is never – and can never be – an excuse for hatred against the Jewish people – any more than criticising the British government would be an excuse for hatred against the British people.

Put simply, there can be no excuses for any kind of hatred towards the Jewish people.

There never has been – and there never will be.

And let me say this too. We will never forget where that hatred and prejudice can lead.

That is why it is right that the United Kingdom will have a permanent and fitting National Memorial to the Holocaust standing next to Parliament together with a learning centre that will teach the lessons of the Holocaust for society today and act as a voice against hatred in the modern world.

And I am delighted that just last week, the cross-party United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation announced that Sir David Adjaye, Ron Arad and the landscape architects Gustafson Porter and Bowman have won the international design competition for the memorial and learning centre with their evocative concept design for this new national landmark at the heart of

our democracy.

In saying all of this I do not underestimate the scale of the challenges we face together.

The challenge of fighting hatred in all its forms.

The challenge of bringing people together.

The challenge of fulfilling Balfour's vision of peaceful co-existence.

But neither do I underestimate the scale of the prize that is at stake.

I saw a glimpse of that prize just last Saturday when I attended a charity concert with the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra on London's South Bank – an orchestra that brings together young Israeli and Palestinian musicians as well as those from several other Arab countries to promote co-existence and intercultural dialogue.

They were performing together raising money for the Jacqueline du Pre Tribute Fund which helps fund MS research.

And through their shared love of music they escaped the divides of their history to come together for a united cause.

In their actions, and in many others like it, the spirit of Balfour lives on.

So let us tonight be inspired by that spirit.

Let us recognise the contribution of Balfour in fulfilling what was once little more than a two-thousand year old dream for a persecuted people.

Let us take inspiration from the vision he showed as we work together for that future where Arabs and Jews can live in peaceful co-existence.

And as we look to that future, let us mark with pride what has been achieved with the creation of the State of Israel and – in Balfour's own words – “a national home for the Jewish people.”

Speech: “We meet today at a crucial time for global displacement with the number of people forcibly displaced at an all time high since the Second

World War”

Thank you Mr President, and at the outset, all the very best for your month as Presidency. I also want to thank High Commissioner Grandi for his compelling but concerning remarks this morning.

We meet today at a crucial time for global displacement, with the number of people forcibly displaced at an all time high since the Second World War. And sadly, the trajectory is only upwards.

Today, I want to share the story of just one of the 65 million people currently displaced around the world. It's the story of a mother from Rakhine State, faced with the hardest decision of her life: to flee into the unknown or face the violence engulfing the that province she calls home.

“We were happy,” she told a journalist last month. “Now, we are in this chaos. They are killing and burning houses; people are unable to stay.”

Faced with such brutality, she had no choice but to flee with her husband and children, risking the journey to Cox's Bazaar.

“When we got in the boat,” she said, “we were scared as water was getting in. I was scared that it would sink; people were crying.”

Her husband went missing as they fled, and she said, “I don't know if he is dead or alive.”

Together with her children, she eventually reached safety – and I pay tribute to Bangladesh for the humanitarian assistance provided to her and to so many others.

But that family's story has been repeated and repeated and repeated over the past months. Only two days ago, a boat carrying refugees to Bangladesh capsized, claiming the lives of at least four people. And it's a story that will only keep being told until the conflict pushing them away is fundamentally addressed and they are allowed to return home.

As Filippo rightly said, whether in Burma, in Syria, or anywhere else in the world, this Council has a unique role to play in maintaining the peace and security that would have stopped that family and so many others like them from having to flee their home. And we have a special responsibility also to hold to account those who do not respect international humanitarian law, refugee law and those who fuel displacement.

Simply put, the stark number of people in need today tells us that what we're doing is not working. Refugees are spending longer and longer displaced, often in poverty with a dwindling hope of return. A new global approach is now needed to tackle protracted crises and a more comprehensive response is required to help the growing number of people currently displaced.

That's why the UK strongly supports the aims of the Comprehensive Refugee

Response Framework. It focuses on long-term, sustainable solutions. These help build the self-reliance of refugees and ease pressure on countries like Kenya, Uganda or Lebanon that have generously welcomed and hosted so many.

This Framework means delivering jobs, education, better services to refugees and host communities, while also better co-ordinating the international response. The UK actively supports this approach where the new Refugee Response Framework is being rolled out.

We're also already delivering the sort of long-term response to refugees' needs that the Framework recommends – including through job compacts to provide tens of thousands of refugees with the opportunity to work in countries such as Jordan or Ethiopia, as well as innovative education programmes and support to host communities and refugees alike.

To make these approaches work, UNHCR has a vital role to play in dialogue with governments, partnerships with other actors, and giving advice and support where needed. In Jordan, we welcome the cash assistance that they are giving to refugees to meet basic food needs. In Turkey, we support the assistance they are providing to refugees to prepare for the oncoming winter. And in the response to the crisis in Burma, they also have a role to play in the returns process in cooperation with the Bangladeshi authorities.

But to deliver all this and more, it is clear that UNHCR, like all the other parts of the UN, will have to reform, and I welcome High Commissioner Grandi's commitment to this. UNHCR has a central role, working with other agencies, in reforming the humanitarian system. It's important that UNHCR continues to work better and more collaboratively with partners on the ground, including with development actors. We want to see improved transparency, increased accountability to beneficiaries, more multi-year programming, and a continued scale up in the use of cash.

Because, Mr President, in the face of an unprecedented need, it's clear that we cannot just do business as usual. We need a new approach, and we look forward to working with colleagues from the Security Council, from UNHCR, and elsewhere to achieve that new approach.

Thank you.

[**News story: Elisabeth Stheeman appointed to the Financial Policy Committee**](#)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, has today announced the appointment of Elisabeth Stheeman as an external member of the Financial

Policy Committee (FPC).

Elisabeth Stheeman's appointment fills the external position on the FPC created by Dame Clara Furse, who stepped down in November 2016. Elisabeth will serve a three year term, which will begin in early 2018.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Elisabeth Stheeman to the Financial Policy Committee of the Bank of England. Elisabeth has had an impressive career in financial services and will deliver invaluable experience to the FPC's work. I wish her well in her new role.

Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney said:

I am delighted to welcome Elisabeth Stheeman to the Financial Policy Committee. The FPC will benefit greatly from Elisabeth's extensive and varied experience in financial services. In particular, her wealth of experience within the asset management and investment banking industries will bring fresh perspectives to the FPC's policy deliberations. I look forward to working closely with her and the rest of the FPC to promote the good of the people of the United Kingdom by maintaining financial stability.

Further information

Elisabeth Stheeman is an external adviser to the Bank of England, providing independent advice and senior industry expertise to the Prudential Regulation Authority. Elisabeth is also a current member of the supervisory boards of Aareal Bank AG and TLG Immobilien AG in Germany and Korian SA in France.

Prior to this, Elisabeth has worked for over 25 years in the financial services industry, including roles as a Chief Operating Officer in Investment Banking at Morgan Stanley (2007 to 2012), and as a Global Chief Operating Officer for LaSalle Investment Management (2013 to 2014). Elisabeth's expertise extends across a wide range of areas including capital markets, investment banking, real estate and private equity.

About the Financial Policy Committee

The FPC was established in 2013 and is a vital part of the government's system of financial regulation.

The FPC is the UK's macroprudential regulator: its objective is to protect and enhance the stability of the UK's financial system by identifying, monitoring and addressing systemic risks.

The FPC works with the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) and the

Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to address risks to the financial system as a whole, while the PRA and FCA have responsibility for microprudential and conduct regulation of individual firms, respectively.

Press release: PM meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu: 2 November 2017

The Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Downing Street earlier today.

The Prime Minister said the UK is proud of the role that we played in the creation of the state of Israel and we mark the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration today with pride and respect.

She noted that the relationship and friendship between the UK and Israel has continued to grow over many years and we are firmly committed to continuing to deepen it across many areas, including trade and investment, science, innovation, technology, and our very close defence and security cooperation, particularly in the fields of counter-terrorism and cyber security.

They discussed Iran, where the Prime Minister reiterated the UK's continued strong support for the JCPOA nuclear deal and the view that we share with our E3 (French and German) partners that it is critical for regional security.

They agreed it was vital that the deal is properly enforced, and that the international community needs to work together to counter Iran's destabilising activity in the region, including its support for Hizbollah in Syria and Lebanon.

They discussed Syria and Iraq, with the Prime Minister reinforcing the need to defeat Daesh in both countries, and the importance of achieving political settlements to bolster regional security and stability.

They also discussed the Middle East Peace Process, where the Prime Minister made clear that the UK continues to support a two-state solution as the best means of achieving lasting peace, with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign.

They discussed the need to overcome obstacles to peace, with the Prime Minister noting our grave concerns about illegal settlements.

The Prime Ministers also discussed the fact settlements are not the only obstacle and that the people of Israel deserve to live free from the scourge of terrorism and anti-Semitic incitement.