

Speech: Career Fair for Persons with Disabilities: speech by Jemima Gordon-Duff

Honourable Minister,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It's a pleasure to join you today at this annual Career Fair – thank you for inviting DFID to speak.

As you may know, the UK government has a growing focus on disability. In DFID, our aim is to ensure that people with disabilities are systematically and consistently included in everything that we do.

Our Secretary of State became the first Cabinet Minister in British history to use sign language to make an announcement at the dispatch box in Parliament.

We held a Global Disability Conference in London to support the effort to advance disability inclusion. At this, the Governments of Ghana, UK and many others committed to drive forward implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

And yesterday, DFID launched its new Strategy for Disability Inclusive Development which prioritises action on: inclusive education, social protection, economic empowerment, and humanitarian action.

This focus on disability is no accident. For too long, disabled people have faced discrimination, stigma and a lack of practical support. And this harms not only the individual but also the society in which they live.

In Ghana, persons with disabilities have lower education attainments; are less likely to have a job; and face significant social discrimination and stigma compared to those without disabilities. A BBC documentary in 2015 described Ghana as the “Worst place in the world to be disabled”.

I want to include a particular focus on those with mental health conditions as a form of disability. They have a higher risk of experiencing violence, homelessness and wrongful incarceration. They can become trapped in a cycle of poverty and mental health. We must break this cycle.

So as the broad partnership between the UK and Ghana matures and we support Ghana move beyond aid, this will also include a focus on disability.

His Excellency the President's vision for a self-reliant Ghana is truly inspiring and is applauded by the UK and all development partners. In the long term, economic development is the sustainable pathway to self-reliance.

But as the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights found “the benefits of Ghana’s economic growth so far have overwhelmingly been the wealthy”. Inequality is rising and the poor and marginalised, including the disabled, risk being left behind.

So, Ghana Beyond Aid must be about more than “self-reliance” through industrialization. It must be broader. It must be more inclusive. It has to address the “self-reliance” of the most marginalized Ghanaians. Because unless every citizen reaches their full potential, nations, including Ghana, never will.

That means supporting the 2.8 million Ghanaians who suffer from some form of disability. We need to work together across our governments but also within society to address the barriers that prevent economic empowerment; enhance economic and social participation; and promote accessibility and usability so that services are accessible to all.

DFID Ghana is designing a new programme that will focus on supporting those with disabilities, in particular mental health conditions. It aims to:

- to strengthen policy frameworks on disability and mental health;
- support a shift towards providing health services to those with disabilities through the primary health care system; and
- reduce the stigma and discrimination towards those with disabilities and tackle human rights abuses.

Empowering people with disabilities does not just affect the individuals – it leads to better decisions and more effective outcomes for communities, for nations and for the world.

Thank you.

[Press release: Security deposit cap reduced to save renters hundreds of pounds](#)

Private renters are set to benefit from new measures reducing the amount tenants have to pay up front to secure a home from 6 weeks’ rent to 5 for annual rentals of under £50,000.

The move, announced as part of the [Tenant Fees Bill](#), is a further step by Communities Secretary James Brokenshire MP towards ending costly fees imposed on tenants when they first move into their property – creating a fairer housing market that works for everyone.

Around 1 in 3 renters who currently pay a deposit are set to benefit from the change – saving tenants £64 million in the first 12 months by keeping more of their hard-earned cash, while also making sure landlords are able to recover costs in the event of damage to their property.

The new cap will apply to properties where the annual rent is less than £50,000. A deposit of 6 weeks' rent will continue to apply where the annual rent is £50,000 or more.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Today's amendments will make renting a home of your own more affordable, fairer and more transparent – enabling tenants to keep more of their cash and stopping unexpected costs.

Everyone deserves a home to call their own. Yet for some renters, moving to a new house can be difficult due to high upfront costs and letting fees.

This is unacceptable. I want to see a housing market that truly works for everyone, and one which provides a better deal for renters.

Other amendments to the Bill include protecting tenants from unfair fees by limiting the type of default fees that can be charged by landlords and property agents.

This change means that during the tenancy landlords and agents will only be able to charge fees to replace lost keys or for late rent. Landlords will still be able to claim back costs for damage through the tenancy deposit at the end of the tenancy. However, landlords and agents will not be able to write lots of different default fees into a tenancy contract and tenants cannot be charged hundreds of pounds for a damaged item that actually only costs a few pounds to replace.

It builds upon comprehensive measures taken by ministers to increase protection for tenants and drive up standards in the private rental sector, including:

- scrapping letting fees charged by both landlords and letting agents, which can cause a significant affordability problem for tenants and are often not clearly explained
- capping holding deposits at no more than 1 weeks' rent and ensuring landlords and agents return holding deposits to tenants within 14 days
- capping the amount that can be charged for a change to a tenancy at £50 unless the landlord can demonstrate that greater costs were incurred

The deposit cap of 5 weeks' rent only applies to properties where the annual rent is less than £50,000. A deposit cap of 6 weeks' rent will apply where the rent is £50,000 or greater. Properties where the annual rent is greater than £100,000 are out of scope.

Press release: UK Holocaust Memorial to reaffirm Britain's commitment to stand up against antisemitism, prejudice and hatred

Situated next to Parliament, the Memorial will stand as a permanent reminder of the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy to be vigilant and responsive whenever our values are threatened.

The [Mission Statement](#) for the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation vows that the national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre will reaffirm Britain's commitment to stand up against antisemitism, prejudice and hatred in all its forms.

Released alongside the [final designs for the Memorial and Learning Centre](#) proposed for alongside Parliament, the Mission Statement affirms that the Memorial will be a permanent reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences.

By setting history's worst example of the disintegration of democratic values against the greatest emblem of Britain's aspirations for democracy, it will stand as a permanent reminder of the responsibilities of citizens to be vigilant and responsive whenever and wherever those values are threatened.

The Memorial, proposed for Victoria Tower Gardens alongside the Houses of Parliament, will be dedicated to the 6 million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust and all other victims of the Nazis and their collaborators.

The thematic exhibition will set the Holocaust within the British narrative: historically, politically and culturally. This narrative will be balanced, addressing the complexities of Britain's ambiguous responses to the Holocaust, avoiding simplistic judgements and encouraging visitors to critically reflect on whether more could have been done, both by policymakers and by society as a whole.

The Foundation is firmly committed to working with other institutions across the UK supporting Holocaust commemoration and education. Visitors will be encouraged to explore other resources, including Imperial War Museum London's new Holocaust Galleries which are due to open in 2021.

Opening alongside new Second War Galleries, IWM's reinterpreted Holocaust Galleries will present critical insights into the Holocaust as well as integrate the devastating events of the Holocaust into the broader history of

the Second World War, revealing why this often overlooked dimension is so important.

UK Holocaust Memorial co-Chair the Rt Hon Ed Balls said:

The proposed Holocaust Memorial will stand as a national place of remembrance of the lives lost and the communities torn apart in the wake of decisions made in another parliament, not so far away in time or distance from our own.

There is no better place than Victoria Tower Gardens, just metres from our own Parliament, to remind ourselves of the value of democracy and the need to keep the lessons of history at the heart of our institutions and the decisions our elected politicians make every day.

Holocaust learning and education is absolutely fundamental if we are to create engaged and vigilant citizens to hold their elected representatives to account. The UKHMF is firmly committed to working closely with the Imperial War Museum and leading organisations across the country to deliver this vital work.

UK Holocaust Memorial co-Chair the Rt Hon the Lord Pickles said:

The Holocaust had a huge impact on Britain – we are the nation of Kindertransport and liberation; of post-war survival and reconciliation. However, it is important to ensure that our examination of the past is honest and unblinking. We will properly explore aspects of the Holocaust that are less flattering to the United Kingdom.

At the core of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre is a commitment to learn from this darkest chapter in our history, to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to explore the universal lessons of the Holocaust as a reminder of where hatred, intolerance and prejudice can lead if left unchecked.

Complementing the many high-quality and committed institutions already engaged in Holocaust education and commemoration, the new Memorial and its exhibition will broaden and deepen understanding of the Holocaust across the whole nation.

Secretary of State for Communities the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

The United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre will stand in its exceptional and symbolic location as a national centre for remembrance and education at the very heart of our national life.

Our country stands together against the hatred, ignorance and bigotry that led to the Holocaust and other genocides. By placing the greatest example of where democratic institutions elsewhere failed to protect its citizens next to our own Parliament, we are making a strong commitment to stand up whenever our shared values are threatened.

The design for the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, proposed by a team led by architect Sir David Adjaye, with Ron Arad Architects as Memorial Architect, and Gustafson Porter + Bowman as Landscape Architect, has been developed over the past year in consultation with local residents, Holocaust survivors, communities of a range of faiths and backgrounds and key experts from landscape design to Holocaust education.

The final scheme as released today proposes a sensitive yet impactful memorial, well integrated into the green space of the Gardens, with a multipurpose courtyard space that leads to a unique underground space set aside for a world leading exhibition on the Holocaust and its impact on Britain.

In September 2018, the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation hosted a public exhibition. The second exhibition, taking place this week, outlines the design alterations and modifications made following extensive public consultation and stakeholder engagement ahead of the Memorial's formal planning submission in the coming weeks.

Following feedback from the first exhibition, more information has been provided on the following aspects of the scheme:

- Plans for the interior of the Learning Centre and a mission statement to outline plans for a world-leading and unique exhibition that will serve as a national centre of remembrance and education.
- Plans to improve the setting of the Buxton Memorial to the abolition of slavery while maintaining views of this important memorial, in addition to the landscape design that will link together the garden's existing memorials commemorating the efforts and effects of social injustice.
- Following public comments, plans to retain 100% of the children's play area and create a new café kiosk and consult the local community on new play equipment.
- More detail on ticketing travel and transport strategies including coach parking. The expectation being that through a pre-booked ticketing strategy in the first 2 years, there will be no queues to the memorial. Traffic will be carefully managed, with limits on coach drop off times and dedicated parking spaces beyond the immediate area.

- The measures taken to preserve the Victoria Tower Gardens for the use of all, including a strategy to boost tree health and to enhance and improve the gardens through sensitive landscaping and planting, befitting an historical and cherished London park.

Details of the design scheme

In 2016 Prime Minister Theresa May launched a design competition for a Memorial and underground Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens, adjacent to Parliament in Westminster.

The winning scheme was proposed by a team led by architects Adjaye Associates, with Ron Arad Architects as Memorial Architect and Gustafson Porter + Bowman as Landscape Architect. Their proposal set out to create “a living place, not just a monument to something of the past” and the desire to create an immersive journey for the visitor who would enter a memorial embedded in the landscape of the Gardens.

The jury found the proposal deftly resolved an essential challenge of the brief: being visually arresting (“highly visible from near and far”) yet showing sensitivity to its location and context (“a bold and sensitive collaboration between architecture, landscape, art and design”). The design was found to have clear potential to be developed into an iconic memorial and powerful educational experience, welcoming visitors from the UK and beyond to learn and reflect.

The final design for the Memorial and Learning Centre consists of 23 bronze fins to the southern end of the Gardens. Visitors will walk through an entrance pavilion, then across a courtyard where they will be confronted with views of Parliament’s Victoria Tower. The Learning Centre, accessed by pathways set between the fins, is an integral part of the Memorial. Visitors will leave with an improved understanding of the Holocaust and its impact on Britain.

The landscape design embeds the Memorial within the park and includes a new intervention – a subtle but distinct slope which creates a new vantage point to the River Thames, a renewed perspective and relationship to the Memorial, and a distinctive entry point for an underground Learning Centre. This subtle shift in the landscape also allows for all existing memorials within the gardens to remain visible whilst key views into Westminster are undisturbed.

Further information

The UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre’s exhibition will be open to the public from 12pm-7pm Wednesday 5 December to Friday 8 December and from 10am-4pm on Saturday 9 December.

See the UK Holocaust Memorial Commission’s report [Britain’s Promise to Remember](#).

UK Holocaust Memorial Mission Statement

The United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial is the UK's national establishment for remembrance of the Holocaust. It is dedicated to the 6 million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust and all other victims of the Nazis and their collaborators.

The Memorial will stand as a reminder of the horrors of the past and will encourage reflection on their implications for British government and society, both at the time and subsequently. The view of Parliament from the Memorial will serve as a permanent reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences. By setting history's worst example of the disintegration of democratic values against the greatest emblem of Britain's aspirations for democracy, it will stand as a permanent reminder of the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy to be vigilant and responsive whenever and wherever those values are threatened.

We seek to preserve the memory of the Holocaust whilst also considering its contemporary relevance. The Holocaust – the murder of Europe's Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators – remains unsurpassed as a historical event in its aims and extent, yet the questions it raises have many echoes in the modern world, including (but not restricted to) subsequent genocides and the persistence of antisemitism.

Deeper understanding of the Holocaust, and of Britain's responses to it, therefore prompts us to ask challenging questions about human behaviour and the world around us. The UK Holocaust Memorial will thus aim both to remember and to encourage reflection on the lessons of the past amongst all British citizens and visitors of all nationalities. In dedicating itself to this mission, Britain reaffirms its commitment to stand up against antisemitism, prejudice and hatred in all its forms

How we will deepen understanding of the Holocaust and Britain's response

We seek to combine a striking architectural monument with an engaging, reflective and powerful exhibition. This will be founded on academic research and judicious use of sources, combined with an experiential approach to immerse visitors in the historical content and provoke their critical thinking.

The display will confront the immense human calamity caused by the destruction of Europe's Jewish communities during the Holocaust, arousing a sincere commitment to mourn, remember and act. Victims will be remembered as individuals, not nameless statistics.

The thematic exhibition will set the Holocaust within the British narrative: historically, politically and culturally. This narrative will be balanced, addressing the complexities of Britain's ambiguous responses to the Holocaust, avoiding simplistic judgements and encouraging visitors to critically reflect on whether more could have been done, both by policymakers and by society as a whole.

We will work with other institutions across the UK supporting Holocaust commemoration and education. We will complement the permanent exhibition with online material, drawing on the same research and sources, making links to other relevant sites, and promoting a deeper understanding of the Holocaust among as wide an audience as possible.

Facing history honestly requires us to question the role of our own Parliament, government and society in the history of the Holocaust, and recurring genocides in its aftermath. The obligation to confront the contemporary rise of antisemitism will not be overlooked, in light of the recent rise of extremist views in Britain and many other countries.

Press release: FCO Minister for the Americas Sir Alan Duncan announces £5 million of UK support for Colombia's peace process.

As part of the UK's long-standing support of Colombia's peace process, an additional £5 million will be provided through the Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). This will increase the UK's contribution to peace in Colombia to over £36 million since 2015.

This extra support will include a new £4 million contribution to the United Nations Trust Fund supporting implementation of the peace agreement with the FARC. This makes the UK the trust fund's largest international donor. £1 million will also be provided to the Organisation of American States' Mission to Support the Peace Process (MAPP OAS), which plays a vital role in peace monitoring and coordination on the ground.

Sir Alan Duncan, Minister for Europe and the Americas, said:

The UK continues to support implementation of the historic peace agreement in Colombia. This latest announcement that the UK will provide an extra £5 million in funding over 2018 to 2019 is an important demonstration of our commitment to facilitating long-term stability in the country.

This additional funding along with other UK support will help the new Colombian Government deliver its commitment to implement the peace agreement by helping to stabilise vulnerable areas, support victims, assist transitional justice and accelerate the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Significant progress has been made in the short time since the signing of the peace agreement in 2016. The FARC has become a political party and this year's elections were the safest in a generation.

However there is considerable work still to be done. Insecurity and the presence of illegal armed groups remain persistent challenges, along with attacks against human rights defenders and increasing deforestation in areas recovering from conflict.

The UK remains steadfast in helping Colombia build a peaceful, more prosperous future for all its citizens.

Further information

[News story: AIDSfree appeal: Government joins campaign to fight HIV and AIDS](#)

It wasn't all that long ago that an HIV diagnosis would be spoken about in hushed tones.

But we've been on quite the journey since the "Don't Die of Ignorance" public health campaign, which for those who don't remember was tinged with an ominous tone, while warning of the risk of AIDS.

The campaign might have raised awareness, but it was symptomatic of an age when understanding was limited, treatments scarce and outlooks bleak. We now live in more hopeful times, where, thanks to medical and cultural advances, an HIV diagnosis is no longer a death sentence but a manageable long term condition.

This was illustrated poignantly last week with the release of figures showing that the UK has now become one of just a handful of countries to meet the [United Nations' HIV/AIDS 90-90-90 targets](#). That means more than 90 per cent of people with HIV have been diagnosed, 90 per cent of those with a diagnosis are treated and 90 per cent of those treated have their symptoms successfully managed.

This achievement is testament to the hard work of our amazing health and care professionals. We are very proud of our parliamentary colleague, [Lloyd Russell-Moyle, the Labour MP for Brighton Kemptown](#), who last week shared his diagnosis with the world. That he felt he could is progress; that it took huge courage to do so it shows that progress is not enough.

The Global Fund / Sam Wolson

Globally, though, the battle is far from over, especially in poorer countries where stigma, lack of awareness and a scarcity of lifesaving medicines persists. AIDS is still the biggest killer of women of reproductive age around the world, and every week about 7,000 young women are infected with HIV.

That is why, through [UK Aid Match](#), the government is joining forces with the [Elton John AIDS Foundation](#) and [The Independent](#) to double every pound the public generously donates to their [AIDSfree appeal](#).

The Global Fund / John Rae

[UK Aid Match](#) means that every time the British public reach into their pockets and donate to a UK Aid Match charity, their generosity goes twice as far. In this case, it will directly change – and indeed save – the lives of people living with HIV in Nairobi and Maputo.

In London and the UK, we have demonstrated what is possible if the right services and support are in place. We passionately believe we can create an AIDS-free future for the world. Three decades on from the first major public awareness campaigns, that's the scale of ambition we should have.

But it means making sure the anti-stigma message is heard just as loud in other major cities, and backed with the resources and expertise to give people the treatment they need to stay well.

This campaign, backed by the generosity of the public, will help us to make this a reality.

Money raised from public donations through the [AIDSfree appeal](#) will be used to support the [Elton John AIDS Foundation](#) projects in six key cities around the world (London, Nairobi, Atlanta, Kiev, Delhi and Maputo). Through [UK Aid Match](#), the UK government will double public donations up to £2m to be spent across projects in Maputo and Nairobi.