

Speech: Opening speech of the regional Chevening conference in Montenegro

Dear Chevening friends,

It's a pleasure to be here with you today and see so many of you from across the region, working together to make this part of Europe a better place.

I want to use this opportunity to thank Chevening scholars from Malaysia, Egypt, Belarus and Colombia as well as representatives of RYCO and Politikon Network for joining us.

And to thank MAUK for organising not one but two events in the last week highlighting the aspirations and abilities of young people across the Western Balkans.

The scientists among you may recognise that change is a constant variable, if not always a controlled one. Each generation feels they are living in a time of unprecedented change, and this one is no different – with technology evolving faster than ever, the amount of information being exchanged around the world multiplying exponentially, old political certainties being challenged and economic power shifting across the globe.

Regional Chevening conference in Montenegro

In this environment, we need to have strong and inspiring leaders to take positive action. Leaders like you, who have taken Gandhi's mantra of being the change you want to see in the world, to heart.

The UK is here to help enable that change both as you continue to build your careers post-Chevening and to support the aspiration that exists in the Western Balkans to build closer links both across the region, and between the region and Europe.

The UK supports the Western Balkans countries when they set out a vision for the future, based on a peaceful, prosperous and democratic region. A vision anchored to European values and systems. This is a path along which Montenegro has already travelled a considerable distance.

The UK hosted the fifth Berlin Process Western Balkans Summit in July 2018, which was a visible manifestation of our commitment to that positive vision, to securing the stability and security of the region, and of Europe as a whole.

One of the ways in which we can support positive change is the Chevening scholarship, which aims to create leaders and contribute to an exchange of ideas. But Chevening is more than that, it is also about networking and collaboration between scholars beyond the borders of their countries. That's why you're here today!

This conference, which will last until Sunday, will focus on democratic transformation. I do hope that what you hear from your Chevening colleagues from the region and Chevening guests from Malaysia, Egypt, Belarus and Colombia will inspire you to build similar conversations amongst your own alumni networks.

I encourage you to use the conversations you will have here in Igalo and the beautiful town of Herceg Novi, to stimulate you into thinking how you'll build on this when you return home. How will you play this experience forward to be a positive force for change with your own career, your professional and your Chevening networks? How can you motivate others to use their own talents and do their best, in any one of a number of areas, such as youth development, human rights online, corporate social responsibility, and addressing radicalisation, etc?

Given how hard you worked to become Chevening scholars, and the commitment and sense of adventure you have displayed by joining us here today, I know that Chevening alumni and this group in particular have the energy and commitment to make a constructive contribution to change and development in the region

There are three important anniversaries we celebrate this year. First, the 140th anniversary of UK bilateral relations with Montenegro, second the 35th anniversary of Chevening scholarships and lastly the 5th anniversary with MAUK.

I am particularly pleased that in the year of these important milestones, we can take pride in the relationship with our Chevening alumni, and in particular with MAUK through this event. Thank you for your work.

I hope that you will enjoy your participation in this conference. I wish you good luck and abundance of inspiration.

Thank you.

Government response: Negotiations on the future relationship: territorial scope

The final provisions to the Withdrawal Agreement record the UK and the EU's commitment to negotiate in good faith and conclude agreements envisaged by the Political Declaration on their future relationship within a certain time frame. The UK's Permanent Representative has sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union setting out the UK's interpretation of Article 184 of the Withdrawal Agreement, which is that it

imposes no obligations regarding the territorial scope of future agreements. The letter also makes clear that the UK will negotiate future agreements on behalf of all territories for whose external relations it is responsible.

A UK Government spokesperson said:

“The Prime Minister has been absolutely clear that we stand behind British sovereignty for Gibraltar and that we will get a deal on the future that works for the whole UK family.

“For the withdrawal negotiations, given there are some circumstances which are specific to Gibraltar, we held talks with Spain which directly involved the Government of Gibraltar. These were constructive and we look forward to taking the same approach to the future relationship.”

Her Majesty’s Government of Gibraltar has issued the following statement:

“Her Majesty’s Government of Gibraltar welcomes the unwavering commitment of the United Kingdom that it will negotiate future trade and other arrangements with the EU that work for all of the British family of nations, including Gibraltar.

The deep and unbreakable bonds that bind the United Kingdom and Gibraltar together have not in any way, and will not be in any way, be diluted as a result of our common departure from the EU.

Brexit will have no effect on the British sovereignty of Gibraltar and the waters that surround it.

Gibraltar is leaving the EU at the same time as the United Kingdom, despite having voted overwhelmingly to remain, because it is our relationship with Britain that guarantees our security, prosperity and the certainty of the rule of law.

The Chief Minister of Gibraltar of her Majesty’s Government of Gibraltar, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: ‘Throughout our history we’ve stuck with Britain. After Brexit, we will stick with Britain in the future too. This is our most important relationship. And as the UK establishes new trading relationships around the world, we look forward to the opportunities that will come from the benefits of our common language, our common law and the ties that bind us with the Commonwealth of nations around the world.’”

[Speech: Annual Bar and Young Bar](#)

Conference 2018: David Gauke speech

Thank you Lucinda [Orr, Chair, Annual Bar and Young Bar Conference]

And I am very pleased to have this opportunity to address you at your annual conference.

Everyone in this room will have their own reasons for choosing a career in law:

To give a voice to the voiceless. To improve lives. To help right wrongs. To pursue justice and fairness. To bring certainty and clarity to a complex world. To rise to the intellectual challenge.

Fittingly, you are called to the Bar – for many, it is a calling.

I recognise not just the contribution that comes from pursuing that calling but the importance of an independent Bar itself.

For my own part, when I was studying law and as a trainee solicitor back in the 1990s, it was clear to me that the law shapes every aspect of our lives and of our country – our families, our relationships, our environment, our trade, the decisions of government.

For example, when I worked on legal contracts, I saw just how important a clear and fair framework of rules is for businesses to make decisions, to invest and to resolve disputes.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time working in law. What I learned helped me shape my politics and sharpen my desire to protect and influence those rules that govern us so they better help everyone fulfil their potential and support a prosperous economy.

So I stand before you today as a proud former lawyer. When I started my career with Richards Butler more than 20 years ago, I never imagined that I would be the first solicitor to become Lord Chancellor.

Without wanting to dwell on quite how long ago that was, it's fair to say that the legal world I experienced then as a trainee solicitor is very different to the one I see today as Lord Chancellor. In the 1990s, the internet was in its infancy. Concepts like AI and machine learning were the preserve of science fiction. Today, they are a reality.

The digital and technological revolutions are making waves across the legal sector, fundamentally changing the way we access and use services.

The profession is also more diverse, open and inclusive – the theme of your conference this year.

Given my legal background, I'm pleased to see more solicitors joining the Bench.

Visible and vocal role models like Anne Molyneux at the Old Bailey and Lord Justice Hickinbottom, who I believe is the fourth solicitor to be appointed to the High Court, and who last year was appointed to the Court of Appeal.

As Anne Molyneux herself has said: "I do not think of myself as a solicitor judge or a woman judge. I am a judge who is a woman and used to be a solicitor. These characteristics should not make a difference." I agree. And I think there are important strides being made on diversity. For the first time, we have three female justices in the Supreme Court. And there is now a greater proportion of female pupils compared to male pupils.

That represents good progress and much promise and potential for the future – but there is much more we need to do. Just 37% of barristers currently practising are women and just under 15% of QCs are women.

Of people practising at the Bar, just under 13% are from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background. That falls to just 7% of QCs.

I am committed to working with the Lord Chief Justice and members of the Judicial Diversity Forum to increase the overall diversity of the judiciary.

To do that, we must also make sure there is proper support in place for potential judicial office holders. Programmes like the Judicial Mentoring Scheme ensures there are role models for lawyers looking to apply for their first judicial appointment.

And the Bar Council, as a key member of the Judicial Diversity Forum, led on the development of the Pre-Application Judicial Education programme.

Launching in spring next year, it will help ensure talented people from all backgrounds in the legal profession are given more support to apply to become a judge. This is positive action carefully designed to make a real difference.

I am grateful to the Bar for their work on this and their ongoing commitment alongside the senior judiciary, Judicial College, Judicial Appointments Commission and the other legal professional bodies.

But of course, as well as promoting access to the legal profession, it is ensuring access to justice itself that is so important.

The ability for everyone to be able to access justice and receive representation is vital for a just society. That includes having access to criminal defence.

Criminal defence advocates carrying out publicly-funded work in the Crown Court play an enormously important role in our justice system.

I want to say to you that I do understand and recognise your concerns about the sustainability of criminal advocacy. I also recognise the work which goes into conducting complex cases.

I know there are strong concerns and that feelings and passions have run high

this year as we have sought to improve the current legal aid scheme.

I have always believed that, given the importance of this criminal advocacy to our justice system, it is important to get any reform right.

In August, we launched a consultation on proposals to spend an additional £15 million on a range of fee increases across the scheme.

As throughout this process, we have been working with representative bodies of the legal professions, including the Bar Council, the Criminal Bar Association and The Law Society, and have carefully considered the consultation responses.

I can announce today that on top of the £15 million we have already proposed, the government will commit a further £8 million of additional funding to the scheme. That brings the total increase to £23 million.

This extra money will be mostly targeted at cases conducted by junior advocates to support continued investment in the profession.

We will also bring a proposed 1% increase to all fees forward so that the rise comes into effect alongside the planned introduction of the new scheme, rather than from April next year.

I also think it's important to recognise that whilst these improvements must be given time to bed in, there is scope to further improve the way criminal advocates are paid so that we better reflect work done in an evolving and modernising justice system.

Our best chance of succeeding in that task – in designing schemes which incentivise efficient and effective proceedings, in improving access to justice – is if the government and the legal professions work together.

Because of that belief, I am committed to working closely with the legal profession to ensure that criminal defence advocacy is fit for the modern age, and is sustainable, so that people from all backgrounds can enjoy a decent career doing such important work.

Now, as part of, and alongside access, the experience people have of justice and our courts is also important – for the public and legal professionals alike.

It clearly isn't right that some of our court buildings have leaking roofs, peeling paint, broken doors and out of order lifts. The impact of this isn't just on the physical functioning of our courts, it has an impact on the morale of those who work in them and on the experience of those who use them.

That's why over the last two years, we have spent significantly more than in previous years on our court estate. Last month, we also secured an extra £15 million from the Treasury for maintenance and security of our court buildings.

I am under no illusion that this is one step in a longer journey to make our

courts fit for the future. But spending more this year on our courts will help to make some improvements to the estate as we continue with our wider programme to modernise services and move more of them online so they are easier to use and more efficient.

We must ensure the justice system embraces the huge changes that are happening now and that are coming down the track in how people access services. That's why we are looking to the future at how we can best empower people to access justice in ways that fit with how we live and work today.

For example, the digital divorce service launched in May is reducing the stress faced by couples applying for a divorce.

And reforms in the criminal justice system are making it work better for everyone too – from making pleas online for low-level offences to piloting a new digital system for the police, CPS, courts, judiciary and defence to allow a single shared view of case information online.

I am grateful to the Bar for the contribution you are making to the court reform programme. I know there are strong feelings on this and we won't agree on everything, but your insight is invaluable. I hope that many of you will be participating in the session led by Susan Acland-Hood later today.

We also need to realise the huge opportunity that exists from harnessing the powers of new technology and innovation for our legal services.

Our growing LawTech industry has the potential to open up the justice system and legal services sector like never before, not to mention the opportunities for those working in it.

Technology is changing our world.

If our justice system and our legal services sector is to remain internationally competitive, it can't stand still. It needs to continue to change and embrace the technological revolution, as well as respond to the way people expect to be able to access justice and legal services.

Today, lawyers must not only advocate, they must innovate. By doing this, I believe the UK can not only remain a world-leading provider of legal services but a powerhouse for new and innovative legal technologies, such as for SMART contracts.

New technologies – underpinned by English law – and nurtured by a government committed to helping this burgeoning sector.

Our £20 million Next Generation Services Fund is supporting innovation across the legal, accountancy and insurance sectors.

I'm pleased to say we will be announcing the successful bidders for that investment shortly. This is on top of the £700,000 recently awarded to the Solicitors Regulation Authority to support AI innovations within the legal services sector.

Alongside that investment, it's important we also focus on the education and skills of the lawyers of today – and tomorrow – to ensure they not only survive, but thrive, in this new world of AI, Big Data and Smart Contracts.

I was reading recently about an experiment you may be familiar with where 20 experienced lawyers in the US and an artificial intelligence system went head to head.

The lawyers came armed with their brains, the AI system with machine learning and deep technology.

The challenge was to spot risks in every day contracts. I'm afraid to say that AI won with an accuracy level of 94% compared to 85% across the human lawyers. But arguably more importantly, the AI system took just 26 seconds compared to 92 minutes.

Now, you can either see that as a threat, or as an opportunity. It's how we use this new technology that will be important. The lawyers of today – and tomorrow – will need the right skills in order to do that.

The LawTech Delivery Panel I announced earlier this year, as well as acting as an international champion for the UK's LawTech industry, will provide the strategic direction we need, for example on education, which will be covered by one of taskforces established by Panel.

Realising the potential of the LawTech revolution here in the UK will be important to the competitiveness of our legal services on the world stage, particularly as we look to new markets after we leave the EU.

On Brexit, as you will have seen, the UK and the EU have agreed the terms of the UK's smooth and orderly exit from the EU. In parallel, both parties have also been working to set out a vision for a close and mutually beneficial future relationship.

A draft of the Political Declaration was published on Thursday, and the Prime Minister is meeting the EU today ahead of leaders putting the deal to final agreement at the special November European Council on Sunday.

The negotiations have been tough, and we have pushed the EU hard. We have not got everything we would want, but we have secured important commitments in a number of areas.

The Political Declaration includes a commitment to conclude ambitious arrangements for services and investment, alongside new arrangements on financial services.

Nevertheless, we know that leaving the Single Market will have implications for market access and that some UK and EU service suppliers will not enjoy the same rights as they do today.

On civil judicial cooperation, the UK and the EU have agreed to explore a bilateral arrangement on matrimonial, parental responsibility and other related matters. In addition, the UK intends to apply to accede to the Lugano

Convention.

This deal provides certainty for the UK and avoids the very significant disruption associated with a no-deal exit. The precise details of our future relationship with the EU will be the focus of further negotiations once the UK has left on 29 March 2019, and we will continue to press for the best outcome for the UK justice system.

The saying goes that 'the wheels of justice turn slowly'.

The transformation in the way people use and work in the justice system, as well as the white heat from the LawTech revolution, means those wheels are speeding up.

Yes, there are challenges we need to overcome in the justice system – including challenges for the legal profession. I want to overcome them by working with you. It is important that the reforms we need to make to our justice system carry the general support of those who work in them.

Within the context of that reform, I want to work with you to support and strengthen the legal profession, to make it more inclusive, more diverse and to put it on a sound footing for the future so it can continue to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

[Press release: Increased fees for criminal defence advocates](#)

- government publishes response to AGFS consultation
- spending on fees to increase by £23 million
- money to be targeted at junior advocates

Announcing the move, Lord Chancellor David Gauke also today (24 November 2018) committed to bring forward a 1% increase on all fees to come into effect alongside the new scheme.

The announcement follows a consultation on proposals to increase spending on the revised Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS) by £15 million, announced in August.

After carefully considering the responses, the government will now spend an additional £8 million, bringing the total increase to £23 million. The money will be specifically targeted at junior advocates to support continued investment in the profession.

Lord Chancellor, David Gauke said:

Criminal defence advocates play a crucial role in upholding the rule of law, and it is vital that their pay adequately reflects the work they do in a fair and sustainable way.

We have acted on the views we have heard during our engagement with the Bar and will increase spending on criminal advocates' fees by £8 million, bringing the total increase to £23 million.

Alongside this, we are looking at how we can best enable people to resolve their problems in a modern justice system and are spending £1bn to modernise and reform our courts and tribunals system. This will make it more straightforward, accessible, and provide better value for the taxpayer.

The government is committed to working closely with the legal professions to ensure that criminal defence advocacy is fit for the modern age and open to all.

The revised scheme will be reviewed after 18 months.

Notes to editors

- the scheme will come into effect via an SI, scheduled to be laid in December
- the projected increase is based on overall spend on the Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme in 2016 to 2017

[News story: Operational Honours and Awards list November 2018](#)

The latest Operational Honours and Awards List has been published today. The list recognises the bravery, commitment and commendable service of service personnel within the military.

The serving personnel who have won from the array of awards and decorations have shown outstanding examples of courage and dedication to their work while on operation.

The service they have given to the country ensures that Britain remains ready to face intensifying threats at home and abroad.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The diversity of this year's awards show the extraordinary achievements our Armed Forces.

Whether its defeating Daesh in Iraq and Syria, saving lives and providing disaster relief in the Caribbean or protecting our home waters, our service personnel go above and beyond the call of duty.

It is only right that we recognise those who have demonstrated exceptional skill, bravery and courage. I congratulate all those who have been recognised.

The full list is below

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Brigadier Nicholas Stephen POND

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Colonel John WAKELIN

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Squadron Leader Cristopher Andrew RIGHT, Royal Air Force

Acting Major Jon Sydarby Heathcliff HASSAIN, Corps of Royal Engineers, Army Reserve

Acting Major Timothy James GRAHAM, The Royal Scots Dragoons Guard

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Edward Digby GRIST, The Rifles

Major Peter Alexander HOULTON-HART, The Royal Gurkha Rifles

Sergeant Abigail Frances MORROW, Royal Army Physical Training Corps

Squadron Leader Christopher Andrew WRIGHT, Royal Air Force

Queens Commendation for Valuable Service

Flight Lieutenant Alexander EVESON, Royal Air Force

Wing Commander Cristopher James HOYLE, Royal Air Force

Acting Flight Lieutenant Laura MCDONALD, Royal Air Force

Squadron Leader Edward Alexandar SELLERS, Royal Air Force

Major Thomas Charles LILLEYMAN, Corps of Royal Engineers

Sergeant William Nicholas MACFARLANE, Royal Marines

Sergeant James OLDALE, Royal Marines

Lieutenant Amy GILMORE, Royal Navy

Major Thomas James QUIN, Royal Marines

Staff Sergeant Bradley Ross CARTER, Corps of Royal Engineers, Army Reserve

Captain Sam PATTERSON, The Royal Logistic Corps

Captain Robert Matthew George PRINCE, The Rifles

Captain Lucy Rose STEARN, Intelligence Corps

Acting Corporal Joseph STEER, Intelligence Corps

Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Mark WILDE, The Mercian Regiment

Flight Sergeant Benjamin David CROSSLEY, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Alexander EVESON, Royal Air Force

Distinguished Flying Cross

Flight Lieutenant Thomas Philip HANSFORD, Royal Air Force

Non-operational Gallantry

Queens Gallantry Medal

Leading Seaman (Diver) Simon WHARTON, Royal Navy

Chief Petty Officer (Diver) Kristopher FENWICK, Royal Navy

Queens Commendation for Bravery

Leading Seaman (Diver) Matthew John O'BRIEN, Royal Navy

Able Seaman (Diver) Joshua Thomas SMITH, Royal Navy