

Speech: Pursuing peace and stability in the Great Lakes region

Thank you very much indeed Mr President.

I wanted to take the floor because we are at an important point in this region, but I also wanted to welcome the SRSB back to the Council, and through him, to thank the UN mission for everything they are doing. It is also extremely helpful to have the update from the Ambassador of Congo.

I would like to start by saying to my good friend, the Ambassador of Equatorial Guinea, that it isn't a modest contribution that his country makes, it is much more than that.

Mr President, it's been five years since the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework was signed. It has proved to be a crucial framework for pursuing peace and stability in the Great Lakes region. But as the SRSB and the Ambassador from Congo have spelt out the DRC has always been at the centre of the framework. The situation in the DRC, the nerve centre, affects the stability of the region. As this Council has discussed in recent days, we are now at a critical juncture. What happens in the DRC over the next few months could be a defining moment in greater regional stability. We have a choice, Mr President, between seeing the situation improve or being overturned.

The United Kingdom, for our part, remains committed to supporting the implementation of the PSCF and we support free, fair and credible elections in DRC in December. We welcome the progress that has been made in the five years since the signing of the framework and I'd like to highlight the increase in the participation of women and a commitment to greater regional and international cooperation in the course of advancing peace and security.

That said Mr President, we are concerned that implementation of key elements has not made progress and this includes the repatriation of foreign combatants. As the Ambassador from Congo highlighted, we welcome efforts to reinvigorate the framework and urge all signatories to implement the framework in full, and we are very supportive of what the SRSB had to say on judicial issues. We are also concerned by the continued proliferation of violence in DRC, particularly in North and South Kivu, Tanganyika, Ituri and the Kasais. The results of this instability have indeed been devastating. 4.5 million Congolese have fled their homes and communities. There are more internally displaced people in DRC than anywhere else in Africa. And over 13.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. So we support the other calls in the Council, Mr President, for regional players to come together in the interest of stability in the coming months. And I would like to endorse what the French Ambassador said about the importance of that regional cooperation.

Mr President, I'd like to conclude by talking about elections. Credible and constitutional elections are the only way to end the political crisis and

achieve stability in DRC and we urge the signatories of the framework to ensure that peaceful and credible elections can take place in December 2018. This means that the electoral calendar needs to be respected and key milestones must be met and the confidence building measures of the 2016 December Agreement need to be implemented in full. This critically includes the freeing of political prisoners and the opening of political space and peaceful demonstrations. It is a region Mr President that is in all our interest and the United Kingdom pledges to work together with partners to achieve progress.

I have some other remarks, Mr President, on some other aspects of the region and framework but I will save those for consultations.

Thank you.

News story: UK creating jobs and getting children into school to help Jordan remain a beacon of hope and security

UK aid will boost the resilience and inclusivity of Jordan's economy so that the country can remain a beacon of hope and security in the Middle East, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said in Amman today (Tuesday 10 April).

Our support will help provide more children with educational opportunities, boost skills, create jobs and encourage further investment that will benefit Jordanians as well as Syrian refugees, regardless of gender or disability.

In addition, food, water and medicine given by the UK is providing a vital life-line to Syrian refugees in Jordan who have been forced to flee their country because of the conflict, which is now in its eighth year and has created the world's largest humanitarian crisis.

Speaking at an inclusive school supported by UK aid in Amman, the International Development Secretary said:

"Jordan continues to be a beacon of hope and security in the Middle East, providing a safe place for hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees to live. The UK is committed to transforming the country's economy and helping the government deliver on its commitment to create 200,000 jobs for Syrian refugees and give every child an education.

"We stand by the government of Jordan in creating a more resilient and

inclusive economy and society so that all Jordanians and refugees get the opportunities they deserve, regardless of gender or disability. By empowering vulnerable people to provide for themselves and their families, we are reducing Jordan's reliance on traditional forms of aid.

"I urge the rest of the international community to get behind Jordan's reform plans so that millions of Syrian refugees can get the education, skills training and jobs they need to one day return home and rebuild their country."

Jordan is on the frontline of multiple crises in the region and has experienced a series of economic shocks – including the Global Financial Crisis, the Arab Spring and the Syria conflict – that mean Jordan's economy is suffering from slowing growth, high debt and 18% unemployment, which is at a 25-year high.

In addition, there are 650,000 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan, which is putting significant pressure on vital services and infrastructure.

It is in Britain's interest to support a partnership that goes further in seeking to resolve the ongoing violence and political tension across the region. Long term prosperity in the region will provide a vital foundation for long term stability on which our own security depends.

This year, UK aid will:

- provide loans to encourage over £150 million of investment from other donors to support education reform, as well as grants to create jobs, boost productivity and increase economic resilience;
- help construct critical infrastructure, benefitting millions of people, such as at a landfill site in Amman that is already under construction and will help 4 million people in the local area;
- provide a quality education for 135,000 Syrian refugees and additional school reading and maths support for 175,000 children in primary school;
- launch apprenticeships or vocational skills training to help 10,000 Jordanians over the next three years; and
- give life-saving support to 60,000 of the most vulnerable refugees and Jordanians, including healthcare and rehabilitation for people with disabilities.

As well as helping Jordan meet its pledge to get every child into education and to create 200,000 jobs for Syrian refugees, Ms Mordaunt has committed to provide up to double the amount of funding for economic resilience, in line with key reforms to deliver Jordan's Vision 2025.

The support is part of the UK's long-term partnership with Jordan, which was discussed by the Prime Minister and King Abdullah in November, and will support Jordan's ambitious reform plans the country.

Inclusivity and creating opportunities for all are a vital part of the partnership, which builds on the UK's existing support for inclusive schools so that all Jordanian and Syrian refugee children can have the opportunities

they deserve.

The brutal Syrian civil war, now in its eighth year, 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.

Britain has been at the forefront of the response to the Syria crisis and continues to support the governments of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey so that Syrian refugees can remain close to home until they are one day able to return safely.

Notes to Editors:

1. The Secretary of State has confirmed that Jordan will receive £110 million of UK aid funding for 2018/19, and announced that the UK will provide up to double the amount of funding for economic resilience.
2. Visiting Amman in November 2017, the Prime Minister discussed with King Abdullah a long-term partnership to significantly increase UK funding and diplomatic support for Jordan's ambitious plans to reform the country.
3. The UK is a leading donor in the humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis. To date we have committed over £2.46 billion in humanitarian funding to the region.
4. We have already delivered 20.9 million food rations every month, 8.8 million relief packages, 3.3 million vaccines against deadly diseases and 8.1 million medical consultations for those in need in Syria.
5. In Jordan since 2012, UK aid has already:
 - provided 1.7 million monthly food rations
 - provided 4.5m vaccinations and 306,000 medical consultations
 - given more than 130,000 Syrian refugees an education
 - helped train more than 14,000 early grade teachers to boost education standards for over 260,000 Jordanian and Syrian children; and
 - helped issue more than 90,000 work permits for Syrian refugees.

[Press release: PM phone call with President Trump and President Macron: 10 April 2018](#)

The Prime Minister held separate telephone conversations earlier today with the US President Donald Trump and the French President Emmanuel Macron.

They agreed that reports of a chemical weapons attack in Syria were utterly reprehensible and if confirmed, represented further evidence of the Assad regime's appalling cruelty against its own people and total disregard for its legal obligations not to use these weapons.

They agreed that the international community needed to respond to uphold the worldwide prohibition on the use of chemical weapons.

They agreed they would continue working closely together and with international partners to ensure that those responsible were held to account.

[News story: Civil Procedure Rule Committee: Open meeting 11 May 2018](#)

The open meeting will take place on the above date at the Ministry of Justice, Petty France from 10am – 1.30pm. Guests will be observers only and not be able to participate in the Committee's business or contribute to items in the agenda. However, there will be an opportunity at the end of the meeting for guests to ask pre-submitted questions to the Committee.

Attendance

Accommodation is limited, so we are asking potential guests to complete a short [application form](#) (MS Word Document, 39KB) and return it to:

Jane Wright
Post Point 3.42
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

DX 152380 Westminster 8

Email: jane.wright@justice.gov.uk

Applications to attend close on 27 April 2018

Format of the meeting

The nature of the Committee's work means that we cannot exactly say what topics will be under discussion. A full agenda, accompanying papers and further details will be sent prior to the meeting.

[News story: Measures to deliver quality education across all settings](#)

A package of measures to help make sure children receive the best possible education either at home or outside of school have been announced by School Systems Minister Lord Agnew today.

The announcement will support the families of the estimated 45,500 children that are educated at home, providing parents and local councils with strengthened guidance so both understand their rights and responsibilities.

A [Call for Evidence](#) has been launched to ask for the views of parents and local authorities on how to ensure children receive the expected standard of education at home, including:

- How local authorities can monitor the quality of home education to make sure children are taught the knowledge and skills they need;
- How effective registration schemes are for children who are educated at home; and
- How government can better support those families who choose to educate their children at home.

The Education Minister also announced £3 million to support the joint working of local authorities, the police, Ofsted, the government and other agencies in tackling the minority of out of school settings that seek to undermine British values or expose children to other harmful practices. This work will help to share best practice across the country.

Today's announcement builds on the recently launched [Integrated Communities Strategy](#), which had education at its core. It is part of the drive to ensure all children receive the best possible education, with 1.9 million more pupils in good or outstanding schools than in 2010 thanks to the government's reforms and the hard work of teachers.

Minister for School Systems Lord Agnew said:

Across the country there are thousands of dedicated parents who are doing an excellent job of educating their children at home, and many selfless volunteers working for clubs and organisations that help to enrich children's education outside of school.

It is right that we should build on the high standards we've set in our schools so that every child receives a suitable and safe education – no matter where they are being taught – and that we can act quickly in the rare instances when this is not the case. This support for families and local communities will help ensure all children get the education they deserve.

The Call for Evidence will run for 12 weeks and will ask for views from families that choose to educate their children at home, local authorities and home education support groups. The issues raised include the registration of children who are home educated and the monitoring of home education provision by local authorities. It will build on the existing requirements for local authorities to identify children they believe are not receiving a suitable education and their powers, which can ultimately include serving a School Attendance Order.

The government is also [consulting on revised guidance for parents and local authorities](#) to support them in making sure home education provision is of the highest possible standard. This guidance will set out the processes by which local authorities should identify children who are being educated at home and how best to intervene if they are not receiving a suitable education. For parents, it will offer support and advice on whether or not home education is the right decision for them and their child, while also making clear the powers that local authorities have and the steps parents should take if concerns arise.

The Department for Education has also published its [response to the consultation on regulation for out of school settings](#) – environments that enrich children's education. The department has carefully considered over 18,000 responses and has already taken action by establishing a £3 million targeted fund which will go to selected areas to support work between local authorities and relevant agencies. It will be used to show how existing legal powers can be most effective in addressing safeguarding and welfare concerns, alongside community engagement and outreach. This work will inform the need for any future regulation.

A consultation on a voluntary code of practice for out of school settings will be published later this year to set out what is expected of providers, and the Department will work with local authorities to provide guidance to parents on out of school settings.