

Speech: Call for a Political Settlement to Address the Humanitarian Crisis and Security Threats in Yemen

Thank you Mr President.

And first I'd like to thank our briefers for their updates on the situation in Yemen.

I also want to thank you warmly Ismail, for your tireless efforts over the last three years to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. We recognise that this has been an incredibly challenging task and we appreciate everything you have done to bring all the parties back to the table and to create the conditions for a sustainable peace, often at great personal risk to yourself, so I thank you on behalf of the United Kingdom.

I would also like to welcome the appointment of Martin Griffiths as the new UN Special Envoy and pledge the United Kingdom's full support for his future efforts.

Mr President,

As we've just heard from the UN, the conflict in Yemen has caused the world's most devastating humanitarian crisis. Over 22 million people – more than three quarters of the population – are now in need of humanitarian assistance. Of these 22 million people, more than half require immediate help to save or sustain life. These people will not survive unless they receive assistance.

The United Kingdom is committed to providing that assistance to the people of Yemen. We are the second largest donor to the UN's Yemen Appeal and the third largest donor to the UN overall. We provided \$286 million to the appeal in the Financial Year of 2017/18. We also continue to work hard towards finding a consensus on a Presidential Statement from this Council aimed at responding to the recent developments on the ground.

Despite the devastating humanitarian situation, last year's Appeal was only 70 per cent funded. This year, as the situation deteriorates further, we've just heard that the UN are requesting a record \$2.96 billion. The recent pledge made by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to contribute \$930 million to the 2018 Appeal is very welcome, as is their commitment to disburse this by the end of March. The upcoming pledging conference hosted by Sweden and Switzerland is also an opportunity to respond to the UN's appeal and help the starving people of Yemen. We call upon all donors to answer this call and ensure all pledges are disbursed in a timely manner.

However, aid alone will not address the needs of the Yemeni people. Imports of food, fuel, and medicine continue to remain well below levels of need. All

parties to the conflict must allow unhindered commercial and humanitarian access throughout Yemen, which is essential to avert the risk of mass starvation.

All plans and efforts to improve access are welcome; however, there can be no substitute for full and unhindered commercial and humanitarian access to the Red Sea ports of Hodeidah and Saleef. Eighty per cent of Yemen's imports enter the country through these ports. Other ports lack the necessary berthing, storage, and milling capacity, and it takes days to transport goods by road across multiple conflict frontlines to reach those in need.

Mr President,

The ongoing conflict in Yemen has not only given rise to the world's largest humanitarian crisis. It's also created ungoverned spaces that terrorists can operate in; posed security threats to regional countries and international shipping; and fuelled regional tensions. This is demonstrated by the ballistic missile launches by the Houthis against civilian targets in Saudi Arabia, and their stated intention to launch attacks against the United Arab Emirates and to "block" the Red Sea international shipping lane.

We agree with the Panel of Experts conclusion that missiles fired by the Houthis of Iranian origin and provided after the imposition of the arms embargo mean that Iran is in non-compliance with paragraph 14 of Resolution 2216. We call upon Iran to cease all and any activity which fuels the conflict in Yemen.

Until an enduring political settlement is reached, the sanctions regime is a critical tool to deter those who would otherwise use violence to achieve their political aims.

Mr President,

Humanitarian aid and access will only provide temporary relief for the people of Yemen. Ultimately, a political settlement is by far the best way to address the humanitarian crisis and security threats emanating from Yemen.

We call upon all parties to engage constructively with the incoming Special Envoy and to abandon pre-conditions in order to restart the political process. All members of this Council should employ all their influence over the parties to resolve their differences through dialogue and consultation.

Thank you.

[News story: Civil news: replacement](#)

contract schedules begin 1 April 2018

We will soon be issuing new civil contract schedules beginning on 1 April 2018.

These will replace the following schedules which are ending on 31 March 2018:

1. 2010 Standard Civil Contract (mediation)
2. 2013 Standard Civil Contract (family, housing and debt, immigration and asylum)
3. 2013 Standard Civil Contract (welfare benefits)
4. 2015 Standard Civil Contract (actions against the police etc, public law and clinical negligence)
5. 2016 Standard Civil Contract (welfare benefits)
6. Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) exclusive schedules
7. Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) exclusive schedules

All schedules will run for 5 months and end on 31 August 2018. The only exception will be the HPCDS schedules, which will be issued for 6 months.

Where to find new schedules

You will be able to view schedules in Contracted Work and Administration (CWA) from 31 March 2018. But HPCDS and IRC schedules will be emailed to you directly and will not be uploaded into CWA.

Reporting work

Work completed in April can be reported from 1 May 2018.

Matter start allocations

In most cases, matter starts will be allocated in accordance with paragraph 1.24-1.27 of the relevant contract specification.

This means matter start allocations will be calculated on the basis that providers receive 100% of the matters that they reported in the previous schedule period.

The only exception is where providers reported 80% or less of their previous allocation. In these circumstances, provider will receive 80% of their previous allocation.

The allocation has been made on a proportional basis to reflect that the schedules are only 5 months long.

Separate matter start allocations

There are a few instances where separate allocation approaches will apply. These are outlined here:

Contract	Allocation
2010 Standard Civil Contract (mediation)	50 matter starts
2013 standard civil contract (welfare benefits)	The standard number of matter starts for the relevant procurement area
2016 standard civil contract (welfare benefits)	30 matter starts
HPCDS and IRC exclusive schedules	The same allocation as in the previous schedule, subject to any changes resulting from court closures affecting some HPCDS

Where providers have the power to self-grant a further 50% matter starts they may do so in addition to the amount specified in the schedule.

Where a provider does not have the power to self-grant, they can request up to an additional 50% of matter starts from their contract manager.

Contract end date

Civil legal aid contracts will end on 31 August 2018. The new 2018 Standard Civil Contract will begin on 1 September and the Housing Possession Court Duty Solicitor Contract will begin on 1 October 2018.

[News story: The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund opens its procurement framework for retender](#)



The new Framework will be in place by autumn 2018. It will have a broad range of suppliers who are able to meet the requirements of delivering a wide variety of CSSF programmes to support National Security Council priorities and objectives.

To be considered for the Framework, suppliers should have experience of

working with government departments, other major international or national organisations or host Governments, in countries with fragile governments and infrastructure and/or are affected by conflict. Regions where the CSSF works include:

- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Europe and Central Asia
- Middle East and North Africa
- South America
- South Asia
- South East Asia
- UK Overseas Territories

MS Powerpoint Presentation, 37.3KB

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Find out more information about the tender on the [Bravo](#) site.

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[Speech: The UK's trading partnership with Hungary](#)

It is a great pleasure to be here in Budapest, at the Hotel Aquincum.

I first came to this great city in 1986, as a student at Cambridge University. I remember my visit with great affection: I had spent the previous few weeks in East Berlin and Prague, so arriving in an ever-so-slightly more liberal Budapest was quite a relief.

And I remember the strong feelings against Communism, and against Soviet domination in particular. And I am proud of the role Britain has played since in supporting democracy and free markets in Hungary.

I was one of the first western European business people to come to Hungary – in 1990 – to do business, and remember well the independent and entrepreneurial spirit of the Hungarian people then, as well.

Moving to the present day – before, during and after Brexit, the UK will

stand by Hungary.

I would like to extend my thanks to our host, the Széll Kálmán Foundation, for the opportunity to speak to you about trade policy in the context of the UK's exit from the European Union.

The UK and Hungary's bilateral relationship

Today, the UK – Hungary bilateral relationship is stronger than ever. Hungary is a close friend to the UK – culturally, with shared values of trade, science and innovation and defence cooperation. Our bilateral relationship will endure long after we have left the EU.

Many Hungarians have come to study and work in the UK since your country joined the EU. My optician is Hungarian. The wife of one of my best friends in Parliament, David Davies MP, is Hungarian. They are just 2 of the 250,000 Hungarians in the UK, who we greatly value. I have heard London could be Hungary's second biggest city after Budapest! Hungarians have made valuable contributions and we want this to continue.

We also want to continue to deepen bilateral ties, and you may know that our embassy recently moved into a bigger building to accommodate a 30% increase in staff here in Budapest.

We have strong economic ties. The UK is currently the sixth largest foreign investor in Hungary and indeed Tesco is Hungary's largest private sector employer, with 20,000 employees, and sources their products from 1,650 Hungarian small and medium sized suppliers.

Our economic relationship extends across a wide range of sectors including telecommunications, electrical machinery, pharma and manufactured goods, making Hungary the UK's third largest export market in Central and Eastern Europe. Hungary's exports to the UK have almost trebled since 2000.

With such close bilateral economic ties, there is no appetite for increased market barriers on either side.

I hope that over the next weeks, months and years, we can continue to work closely with our Hungarian friends and allies.

The UK's future economic partnership with the EU

We want an economic partnership with the European Union that delivers the maximum possible benefits for both our economies whilst respecting the integrity of each other's institutions and autonomy.

We start from a unique position – on day one we will have exactly the same rules and regulations. We are looking for a new trading agreement that reflects the reality of this shared starting point.

Many of our sectors are closely interconnected. The complexity and integration of supply chains, across the UK and EU, show the importance of

ensuring cross-border trade is as free and frictionless as possible.

Our future economic partnership should cover both goods and services – they are often intertwined. The fewer the restrictions, the greater the benefit to businesses, consumers and services providers, on both sides. This will not add up to Single Market membership – we are looking for something different. We understand you cannot have all the benefits of membership of the Single Market, without its obligations.

Our shared goal should be to find a new balance of rights and obligations that reflect the scale and breadth of our close ties. We will need a common set of standards and principles to underpin our new partnership. This is a requirement for any free trade agreement and our future partnership will be no different. Our proposal is ambitious and creative.

It is in both the EU's and the UK's interests to maximise shared prosperity and minimise disruption, while respecting the integrity of the Single Market.

Overnight, on Brexit day, the UK will become almost the largest external trading partner of the EU, second only to the USA – bigger than China, India or Japan. We will be the largest non-EU partner for Hungary itself.

The EU is currently seeking free trade agreements with Mercosur, Australia and New Zealand – it would be absurd not to seek one with the UK.

The EU has a variety of different relationships. But none of the present ones would be appropriate for the UK's future relationship, or in the mutual interests of each side. Joining the EEA would represent too much of a loss of democratic control for the UK, while a Canadian-style deal would offer too low a level of market access.

We can do so much better. European interlocutors, including Michel Barnier, have recognised we will need a deal that reflects “the specificities” of the UK's relationship with the EU. We are optimistic about the discussions ahead.

The Department for International Trade

The particular responsibility of the Department for International Trade is to support UK businesses to export and invest in Europe and other regions of the world, to support them with the finance to do so, and to lead on trade policy – through the EU whilst we are still members, and in setting our future trade policy (my particular role).

We are still actively participating in the making of EU trade policy. I represent the UK at EU meetings of trade ministers, the next one being held in Sofia at the start of next week. We are fully supportive of and engaged in the EU's liberal trade agenda, where particular priorities at the moment are trade agreements with Mexico and Mercosur, and signing the trade agreement with Japan.

I participated in the [11th WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires](#) in

December, and my department is now working hard to maintain ambition at the WTO, advancing discussions on digital trade, domestic regulation in services, investment facilitation, and micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The UK's future independent trade policy

My department has also set out this government's vision for our future independent trade policy last year. The initial thrust of this policy is to provide continuity for business and consumers.

This includes ensuring that UK and EU businesses and consumers can continue to trade freely, as part of a new deep and special partnership. For example, we intend to transition all existing EU free trade agreements, potentially including the EU-Japan Trade Agreement concluded in December. As the UK exits the EU, we will work quickly to establish a new economic partnership between the UK and Japan based on the final terms of the agreement.

To ensure continuity, we are preparing the necessary schedules that replicate as far as possible our current tariff obligations. We will join the [WTO's Agreement on Government Procurement](#) (GPA) as an independent member, maintaining current guaranteed access to global procurement opportunities and offering value for money.

More broadly, we aim to ensure economic prosperity for our businesses, workers and consumers, who often have ties to the continent, too. We support a fair and proportionate rules-based system, for trade at home and internationally. We will also stand for a trading framework that supports foreign, domestic, sustainability, security, environmental and development goals.

Our future independent trade policy will also seek to boost our trade relationships with old friends and new allies. Here, we will seek to increase access for exports, further liberalise the services sector and digital trade, whilst ensuring a high level of protection for consumers, the environment, employees and public services.

However, free trade does not mean trade without rules. We also prepare for a trade remedies framework to protect domestic industry against unfair practices or surges.

Of course we are developing our future independent trade policy in the context of EU exit. We would not bring into effect arrangements that are not consistent with the terms of an implementation period.

In conclusion, before I open the floor for your questions, let me reiterate how important it is to me to listen to your views, concerns and hear about the opportunities you see.

As I said, our future independent trade policy puts continuity for business and consumers first. Britain and Hungary are great friends. I hope we can count on your support.

[Press release: Find out about the latest plans to reduce flood risk in Otley](#)

Visitors to the drop in will have an opportunity to see how feedback from the last event in October has helped to shape options for flood alleviation scheme for Otley.

A review of the digital model of the river is now complete, and the testing of options in the model has begun, so the team would now like to share the findings from the work and get feedback for the next steps.

Representatives from Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and WSP (the consultants undertaking survey and investigation work) will be at the event to answer any questions and discuss the latest progress.

The drop in will be held at:

- The Core Otley, Unit 11 Orchard Gate, Otley LS21 3NX on Thursday 1 March between 4–7pm

The town suffered flooding on three occasions between November and December 2015, which saw 74 properties affected. In the Autumn Statement 2016, Government announced £2 million to invest in a scheme to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses.

The scheme is being led by Leeds City Council working closely with the Environment Agency.

Leader of Leeds City Council Councillor Judith Blake said:

Together with our partners we are continuing to make good progress on our plans for flood prevention measures in Otley. The modelling work on the river is finished and we are now testing the possible options. We want local residents and businesses to be as involved as possible in these plans as they develop, so would encourage people to go along to the drop-in session, find out more and give us their views.

John Woods, flood risk management advisor at the Environment Agency said:

We're grateful to everyone who came along to the last event in October to give us your views and ideas. We have looked at these in detail with Leeds City Council's engineers and consultants WSP and

have tested a number of them in the digital model to assess their impact on flooding. Residents views are once again really important in helping us to shape the preferred option for Otley.

Work to pull together data to better understand the potential paths of flood water as well as collating historic and recent flood information began last year. The information from these investigations, carried out by consultants, WSP, has been used to update an existing digital model of the River Wharfe which has helped to form potential options for a scheme, which are now being tested.

The Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme is one of several schemes that is adopting a catchment-wide approach. This means the entire River Wharfe catchment area will be considered to help reduce flood risk. This approach looks at a combination of natural processes and engineered options to help slow the flow and catch water further up the catchment so that flood peaks are reduced further downstream.

For those who can't make it to the drop-in, members of the project team will be working regularly from Otley Town Council's office, and can be contacted on 01943 466335 or call in for a chat between these times: Tuesday 13th March 3pm – 6pm, Wednesday 11th April 3 – 6pm.