

[News story: National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 national finalists announced](#)

Employers and individuals have beaten off tough competition to be named a national finalist and on 18 January 2018, one from each category will win a National Apprenticeship Award, with highly commended finalists also being recognised on the night.

Now in their 14th year, the [National Apprenticeship Awards](#) demonstrate how employers can grow their own talent by offering apprenticeships and how apprentices are making a significant contribution to their workplace.

Successful National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 national finalists have been announced in the following categories:

Intermediate Apprentice of the Year

- Shannon Green, Althams Travel Services Ltd
- Matthew Gustard, Nottingham City Homes Limited
- Ross Jasper, DCH

Advanced Apprentice of the Year

- Heeran Basi, Severn Trent Water Ltd
- Hannah Magowan, Dale Power Solutions
- Megan Whitbread, Troup Bywaters & Anders

The Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for the Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year

- Christopher Achiampong, IBM
- Charlotte Hughes, GlaxoSmithKline
- Thomas Sherlock, IBM

Santander Award for Apprenticeship Champion of the Year

- Sarah Barley, South Hunsley School
- Julie Honour-Jones, Sir John Lawes School
- Lois McClure, The Co-op

Small Employer of the Year

- Beauty Oasis Spa
- Ginger Nut Media
- McCarrick Construction

Medium Employer of the Year

- Invotra Limited
- Maycast-Nokes Precision Engineering Ltd
- Superior Seals Ltd

The British Army Award for Large Employer of the Year

- Dale Power Solutions Ltd
- Home Group
- Volvo Group UK and Eire

The Open University Award for Macro Employer of the Year

- BBC
- Lloyds Banking Group
- Royal Air Force

BAE Systems Award for Newcomer SME of the Year

- Blue Logic
- Bury St Edmunds Canine Creche
- Lander Automotive Ltd

Rolls-Royce Award for Newcomer Large Employer of the Year

- Magnet
- NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT)
- YBS Group (Yorkshire Building Society)

Also to be announced at the national ceremony will be the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers list 2017, sponsored by Centrica. It features the most exceptional apprenticeship employers from all of the National Apprenticeship Awards employer categories and shows the breadth of employers offering fantastic apprenticeship opportunities.

Sue Husband, Director of the National Apprenticeship Service said:

Announcing award finalists means we are another step closer to the national final and finding out who has a truly bright future ahead of them. Successful finalists all have fantastic stories to tell and their apprenticeship journey – be it as apprentices, employers or those individuals who go above and beyond to champion apprenticeships – is something I personally look forward to finding out more about and to hear how apprenticeships have benefitted them.

I congratulate everyone who has been named a national finalist today and whatever the outcome on the night, each finalist deserves a huge pat on the back for committing to and delivering successful apprenticeships.

Best of luck to all finalists and thanks once again to our generous sponsors for supporting the 2017 awards.

To find out more about the apprenticeship awards visit GOV.UK.

[Press release: UK aid to help over half a million people at risk of slavery](#)

The International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has announced that UK aid will help over 500,000 vulnerable men, women and children around the world who have either survived modern slavery or are at risk of becoming victims.

Ahead of the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (Saturday 2 December) she condemned modern slavery as a “global disgrace” and pledged the UK’s long term commitment to “stamp out this practice abroad” which will in turn support the efforts to end slavery in the UK.

As part of the Prime Minister’s pledge at the United Nations General Assembly to double the UK’s aid commitment to tackling modern slavery, Ms Mordaunt has set out UK aid support which will have a life-changing impact for hundreds of thousands of people at risk of exploitation, as we press for international action to break the business model of the people traffickers.

The UK is stepping up efforts at home and abroad to combat the crimes of human trafficking, forced labour, and abuse, with over 40 million people estimated to be modern day slaves. Behind the numbers are people subjected to horrific exploitation every single day.

The support pledged today will address slavery and trafficking in countries with a high prevalence of these crimes in South Asia, and others such as Nigeria, which are also source countries for trafficking to the UK.

At the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Theresa May announced a global Call To Action, that urged world leaders to show they will not tolerate modern slavery, human trafficking and labour exploitation – with 40 countries now having joined this call to action.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, said:

The continued trade in human beings is a global disgrace – and simply not enough is being done to tackle it.

It is time to eradicate this shameful practice. Slavery, anywhere, must not be tolerated in the 21st century, and our work to stamp out this practice abroad will support our effort to end slavery in the UK. This is a long term challenge and others must follow our lead.

I met with victims of this horrendous crime during my time in Bangladesh who had been exploited and abused who we are now supporting, and it is absolutely right that we protect vulnerable men, women and children from being duped into imprisonment, domestic servitude and forced labour.

Today's £40 million package of UK aid includes:

- £13 million for the second phase of the Work in Freedom programme to prevent trafficking and forced labour among women migrant workers from South Asia, which has the highest prevalence of forced labour globally. This will focus on victims of forced domestic work and garment manufacturing, providing skills training to women before they move to a nearby country for work, supporting women at their destination so they can access help if they are exploited, and working with governments to improve laws and policies to protect vulnerable people from becoming victims of this crime.
- a £20 million contribution to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery, which will be used to target sectors with a high risk of slavery, like the garment sector, fisheries and construction, combating this crime by working with law enforcement, prevention and victim services and business.
- further details of the £7 million DFID support in Nigeria which will focus on creating credible alternative livelihoods in hospitality, creative industries, technology and agri-entrepreneurship so people are not forced into a life of trafficking, providing better victim support and counselling, and increasing public awareness of the risks of trafficking. This is in addition to the Home Office's existing £5 million of support which is improving law enforcement and justice systems to crack down on this crime and root out the perpetrators.

PHOTOS/VIDEOS

[See how UK aid is changing lives in South Asia.](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Second Phase of the Work in Freedom programme follows an original

£10.5 million programme which started in 2013 and finishes in early 2018. This programme has helped 380,000 women at risk of trafficking and forced labour in South Asia and the Middle East. An independent evaluation found it was innovative, highly relevant and delivering results.

- The second phase will focus on sectors with the highest number of forced labour victims, including domestic work and garment manufacturing. It will help over 350,000 women, including through pre-departure training and skills development for women in the communities who are considering moving to a nearby country for work; supporting women at their destination, for example through local unions and support groups so they can access help if something goes wrong; and working with governments to improve laws and policies to protect vulnerable people from becoming victims of this crime.
- The £7 million of DFID support in Nigeria will include around £3 million to create alternative, aspirational livelihoods that can be considered as viable alternatives by potential victims of trafficking to pursuing irregular and dangerous forms of migration, which often lead to victims falling into sexual slavery, forced or bonded labour. UK aid will focus on creating job opportunities in sectors including hospitality, creative industries, technology and agri-entrepreneurship and could help up to 30,000 women at risk of modern slavery.
- DFID's support to Nigeria will also include around £4 million to strengthen systems that support victims of trafficking through improving safe house support and training for counsellors in at least six safe houses; changing attitudes and social norms through working with schools and universities to increase public information and awareness of the risks of trafficking; and building a stronger coalition of partners, including civil society, working on the Anti-Slavery agenda to boost rehabilitation services to help survivors reintegrate into society, to prevent vulnerable people being re-trafficked and falling back into a cycle of exploitation.
- This funding is in addition to £5 million of the UK's Modern Slavery Fund, which the Prime Minister announced in September 2016, that has been allocated to Nigeria and which will build the capacity of Nigerian law enforcement to crack down on the crime, help investigate prolific traffickers, and provide protection and rehabilitation for victims.
- The Global Fund to End Modern Slavery aims to leverage \$1.5 billion to address the lack of resources in tackling modern slavery, and the UK is partnering with the United States to support this initiative. Our initial investment will be used to target problem sectors, like the garment sector, fisheries and construction, combating slavery by working with law enforcement, prevention and victim services and business.

- Together, UK aid support in Nigeria and for the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery will help 150,000 people.

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Speech: “We condemn, in the strongest terms, North Korea’s actions and its continued pursuit of its illegal ballistic missile and nuclear programme”

Thank you Mr President.

We have met too many times this year to discuss the DPRK’s flagrant violations of unanimous Security Council decisions. And I am deeply disappointed that we have to meet again today, after yet another such violation. For the third time, the DPRK regime have tested an intercontinental ballistic missile. Based on an initial assessment, this missile flew higher, and for longer, than any of the previous DPRK missile tests.

So we condemn, in the strongest terms, North Korea’s actions and its continued pursuit of its illegal ballistic missile and nuclear programme. Today we summoned the DPRK Ambassador in London to convey our deep concern at this reckless behaviour.

The latest missile launch is not a one-off. It follows 19 previous launches this year, and North Korea’s sixth nuclear test in September. The latest violation demonstrates, once more, North Korea’s disregard for our collective security and the international obligations, that all of us, as law-abiding states, take upon ourselves. We have condemned the DPRK many times before. The Security Council, along with the wider international community, must now redouble our efforts to persuade the DPRK to change course.

This year, through this Council, we have worked together to implement measures to curtail the regime’s illegal ballistic missile and nuclear programmes. In developing these measures, we have ensured that the humanitarian needs of the population are protected. It is not the people of North Korea that are threatening global security. It is the regime. Our actions are in stark contrast to the brutality of that regime towards its long-suffering people, who are held hostage to the whims of its reckless leadership.

When these measures are fully implemented, we know that they have an effect. And we know too that we must exhaust every avenue to resolve the issue peacefully and diplomatically. We all hope to avoid the need to use military force. This would not only be devastating for the citizens of North Korea but also for global stability, and for all of us. Therefore we must all pursue the existing measures and all other diplomatic avenues available to us, fully and without delay.

The existing measures are only effective if robustly implemented in full by all members of the UN, starting with all of us in this Security Council. Many States do carry out these responsibilities diligently, but it is clear that more must, and can, be done.

The reporting deadline for our Resolution 2371 was on 3 November. But by 21 November only 29 Member States had submitted reports on their implementation of the measures in that Resolution. Considering the size of the threat, this is simply not good enough. The reporting deadline for Resolution 2375 is on 12 December. We call on all UN Member States to meet this deadline and provide an update on the implementation of those measures. We will continue to work with partners around the world to further improve enforcement of the existing measures.

We welcome the valuable work of the Panel of Experts, part of our shared efforts to stop the DPRK's illegal programmes. It provides us with information that we need to implement all relevant measures, and we urge all States to cooperate fully with the Panel and to take swift and robust action in response to panel's recommendations. If they do not, then they are helping the DPRK regime to threaten the world.

I focussed so far on our shared efforts to persuade the DPRK regime to change course. But in closing, I must emphasise that it is the DPRK regime alone that bears responsibility for these programmes and therefore for its international isolation. It has chosen this path. It can change course. A better future is possible for the country and its benighted people.

It must now take the responsible decision to step back towards the negotiating table and to comply with the obligations set by our community of nations.

Thank you.

Speech: "Civilization, education, and our shared cultural heritage will

prevail over destruction, barbarism, and the division of terrorists”

Thank you Mr President.

Thank you also to our briefers, and to the Secretary-General for his report. This provided a comprehensive summary of the actions many of us have taken to protect cultural heritage sites since the adoption of Resolution 2347 and, perhaps more importantly, of what more we can all do to prevent any further destruction.

In recent years with the explosion of conflicts across much of the Middle East and Africa, terrorists have not only endeavoured to destroy the ways in which we choose to live today, but also our heritage and the records of how humanity existed in the past. This attempt to annihilate cultures that are not their own, whether through genocide, ethnic cleansing, or war crimes, all too often goes hand in hand with the destruction of cultural heritage and identity.

As we have seen in Palmyra, in Nimrud, in Timbuktu, these brutal groups do not limit themselves in demolition, but also profit in trading artefacts that should belong to all, and not to selfish individuals. With this trade, they fund more of their activities, be it attempts to expand their territories, inflict terror abroad or disperse their propaganda.

That is why we particularly welcome the International Criminal Court's sentencing of an individual for directing attacks against religious and historic buildings in Timbuktu, as discussed in the Secretary General's report. We encourage the Court to prosecute all individuals who contribute towards this crime, to serve as a deterrent to those who may be inclined to similar actions in the future.

We also welcome the education and awareness-raising projects listed in the Secretary-General's report, and I would like to commend Italy for their leadership on cultural protection. In addition to unified international action through legal and judicial instruments, this kind of practical action is essential to support those countries most at risk.

May I join others in congratulating Ms. Audrey Azoulay on her election as Director-General of UNESCO, and in welcoming her today.

We believe that UNESCO has a meaningful role to play in this arena. We encourage the new Director-General to review UNESCO activity with a view to focusing resources on programmes and projects which will have the greatest impact and demonstrable value for money.

To secure progress, public funding needs to be matched by investment from philanthropists and the private sector. I commend those trusts and foundations that are already supporting work in this area. We need more

organisations to follow their lead and work in partnership with national governments, multilateral agencies, and civil society to protect our shared heritage for the benefit of humanity.

May I take a few moments to discuss the UK's national actions in this area.

Since the adoption of Resolution 2347 we have ratified the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and acceded to both of its Protocols. This demonstrates the importance we place on responding forcefully to the destruction of cultural heritage by terrorists, looters and other maligned forces.

Our enforcement agencies are continuing their efforts to prevent illicit artefacts entering or leaving the United Kingdom. Considering the size of the antiques market, we hope this will have a significant impact.

And we have established a Cultural Protection Fund, initially of \$40 million, which is already helping to protect and conserve heritage at risk in conflict areas, and providing the skills and expertise which are sorely needed to ensure that our shared heritage is saved for future generations.

This will also play an important role in post-conflict situations, and support reconciliation between communities and nations. We know that heritage sites which receive proper protection can produce economic as well as social benefits, for example, through sustainable tourism.

Our Cultural Protection Fund is already supporting projects in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, and Turkey. But we are keen to support other projects across the Middle East and North Africa. So we are exploring the scope to extend the programme to other regions where cultural heritage is at risk.

Mr President, as the Secretary-General's report makes clear, World Heritage Sites and other iconic monuments and artefacts have been subjected to wilful destruction. We should and must do all we can to prevent a recurrence of such acts. Civilization, education, and our shared cultural heritage will prevail over destruction, barbarism, and the division of terrorists.

Thank you.

Press release: Troika Statement on South Sudan

The members of the Troika (Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States) recently traveled to Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, South Sudan, and Kenya in support of the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development

(IGAD) to urgently convene a High-Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) for the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan.

The Troika remains appalled by the dire economic, security, human rights, and humanitarian crisis being inflicted on the long-suffering people of South Sudan as a result of the conflict that their political leaders have generated and fuelled. The HLRF is a critical opportunity to make urgent progress. All parties have a responsibility to the citizens of this young country to participate constructively and be open to real compromise.

As a first priority, all parties must end hostilities as a sign of commitment to the HLRF – as they have pledged to do. The Government of South Sudan, in particular, must cease its pursuit of military victory and make good on its promise to end all obstruction of humanitarian assistance. The Troika also calls on the armed opposition to end all military activity and lift any barriers to humanitarian access.

The Troika strongly supports the calls that we heard from voices across South Sudan and the region for the HLRF to be inclusive, reflecting the interests of all parties, regions, and groups in South Sudan, including young people and women. The Troika emphasizes that all parties to the conflict must negotiate in good faith and work to amend sections of the Agreement that no longer reflect the reality of conditions in South Sudan, particularly those related to power sharing, timelines, and transitional security arrangements. A key goal for the HLRF should be monitored, effective security arrangements durable enough to stop the conflict, improve the human rights and humanitarian situation, and support a political process that produces an agreed path to viable elections. There must also be clear consequences for those who violate the agreement.

Alongside regional and international partners, the Troika will continue to identify and hold responsible those who work against peace, including through economic and other sanctions. They will also act against those who use their positions to fuel conflict and steal from the South Sudanese people and those who facilitate their illicit financial activities.

Further information