

Speech: “It’s clear that Libya now faces a simple choice: a future of stability and security or a return to a past of violence and uncertainty”

Thank you Mr President and thank you Olof for updating us on the work of the Libyan Sanctions Committee and to Ghassan for your thorough and fascinating briefing.

It’s certainly been an eventful two months since you set out your Action Plan for Libya to the General Assembly. Under your guidance, there have been important steps forward to revitalise the Libyan political process. Yet, in recent weeks, violence has escalated again, and it’s clear that Libya now faces a simple choice: a future of stability and security or a return to a past of violence and uncertainty.

Let me start with the positives, and there have been positive developments on the political process. The dialogue committees from both the House of Representatives and the High State Council worked hard to secure agreement on amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement. This has taken courage and compromise, but of course it is only a start. Further commitment from all parties is now needed to sustain the momentum and move Libya forward.

In doing so, we shouldn’t lose sight of what is at stake. It’s a real chance now for Libya to establish a truly national government, one that will enjoy the support of both the House of Representatives and the High State Council, and one that will be able to deliver for all its citizens. Further delay however will only prolong the suffering of ordinary Libyans who, I think we can all agree, have suffered for far too long.

We need only look at the recent escalation in violence to see the consequences of delay. The strikes on Derna, which killed 16 civilians, and the recent apparent summary executions in al-Abyar and Warshefana are examples; there are many others. These escalating acts of violence make it unambiguously clear that a political solution is no longer a choice, but a critical necessity for the Libyan people.

We should all be concerned by these continuing human rights violations and abuses across the country, so many of them at the expense of civilians, including migrants. Let us all condemn extra-judicial killings by all parties from all sides of the conflict. The climate of impunity must stop and I reiterate our support for Libyan and international efforts to bring to account those responsible for such crimes.

It is clear from the recent escalation in violence that the existing arms embargo has not cut off the flow of illicit weapons in and out of Libya. This is not only undermining the peace and security of Libya and the region; it is

also playing into the hands of terrorists groups who continue to threaten global security. I urge all Member States to make every effort to ensure that the arms embargo is strictly observed.

Engagement between both sides is not only needed for the political process, but also for the economy. A prosperous economy will only be realised if key economic institutions take the steps necessary to introduce important reforms. It is also vital that Libya's oil resources are used to benefit the country as a whole. I call on all Member States to make sure they continue to do all they can to prevent illegal oil smuggling and to enforce the sanctions regime designed to protect Libya's oil wealth for the benefit of the Libyan people.

Let me close Mr President by reiterating that the Libyan Political Agreement remains the only valid framework for Libya's transitional period into 2018. The UK will continue to support the immediate next steps to amend the Agreement and agree a reformed Presidency Council. We will also support subsequent efforts to promote national reconciliation, to agree a longer-term constitution and to prepare for elections. We believe the United Nations must remain firmly in the lead, and the international community must be united and steadfast in our support.

Because put simply, conflict and instability in Libya are hurting the region, they are hurting globally, but most of all, they are hurting Libya's citizens. So I close by calling on Libya's leaders, from all sides, to show that they are committed to delivering peace and security for all Libyan people. They must look beyond immediate personal considerations and towards the long-term future of their country. They have a responsibility to make progress, and I urge them to continue to work with Special Representative Salamé and to take the bold steps required to move Libya forward.

Thank you.

[News story: Reappointment to the School Teachers' Review Body](#)

Ken Clark reappointed to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), which looks at pay, duties and working time of teachers in England and Wales.

Ken Clark has been reappointed as a member of the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) for a second 3-year term to end in December 2020.

The STRB provides independent advice to the government on pay and conditions for teachers and school leaders in England and Wales.

This reappointment has been made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments and was made by the Prime Minister.

Ken Clark is a labour economist based at the University of Manchester where he is also Director of Teaching and Learning in the School of Social Sciences and a member of the ESRC Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity. He is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Labour Studies, Bonn. Ken has researched, taught and published in the area of labour economics for over 25 years.

Statement to Parliament: A Statement on the Independent Complaints and Grievance Policy

Thank you Mr Speaker, with permission I will update the House on steps being taken to tackle harassment and abuse in Parliament.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as my Right Honourable Friend the Prime Minister has made clear – there can be no place for harassment, abuse or misconduct in politics.

I said we would take action in days, not weeks and that is exactly what we have done.

Getting this right matters to everyone here – and I want to thank the Honourable Member for Birmingham Yardley – who I know is taking a keen interest in this matter.

I hope today's statement will answer some of her questions.

Last week, the Prime Minister convened a meeting of the party leaders to discuss this matter.

All party leaders attended and there was agreement to work together to make swift progress.

The proposals outlined by the Prime Minister for an independent grievance procedure have been embraced across this House, and I am reassured by the consensus.

All parties have acknowledged that any proposal must adhere to three specific criteria: it must have cross-party agreement, it must include both Houses of Parliament and it must be independent.

The new system will be available to all who work here – including all MPs' staff, Lords staff including cross-benchers, interns, volunteers, journalists, and constituency staff.

It was agreed that the political parties would establish a cross-party working group to take this work forward, and I am pleased to report that the group met for the first time on Tuesday.

The working group is made up of representatives from every party and from both Houses – Conservative, Labour, SNP, Lib Dem, Plaid Cymru, DUP, Green, and cross-benchers.

Very importantly, MAPSA, the Members and Peers Staff Association, and UNITE are representing parliamentary staff on the group, and are ensuring that their experiences, and their requirements, are taken fully into account.

The first meeting of the working group made clear that the voices of staff will be at the heart of this process. Any new system will need the absolute confidence of those who will use it.

The working group also agreed that the new procedure must be independent of the political parties – and that to inform the group over the next two weeks, we will hear from a number of different contributors.

This will include hearing from staff directly, as well as groups including ACAS, IPSA, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, and experts on a range of topics that will help us to shape a new process.

Anyone wishing to submit their own thoughts or suggestions to the group in writing is also very welcome to do so.

This is early days for the working group, and we will certainly be working quickly but thoroughly to make sure we create a new procedure that provides confidence to all who use it.

I know that in addition, many members of staff have expressed an interest in the provision of HR training, as well as better employee support for staff.

All those employing staff need a certain amount of guidance and training that will enable them to be good employers.

This week the working group heard directly from the Clerks of the two Houses – who provided a very helpful account of the procedure used by House staff.

Whilst we have recognised that the Respect policy used by the House authorities provides an excellent reference point, the independent procedure we are seeking to build will take into account the specific needs of Parliament, and the group has acknowledged the need for more than just mediation.

The working group agreed a new system should provide support, advice and action on a wide spectrum of complaints around bullying and harassment.

We will do everything in our power to ensure the solution is transparent, fair, and effective.

And this fairness, Madam Deputy Speaker, must also apply to MPs and Peers,

because we do recognise that right across both Houses we have many model employers who genuinely care about, and look after, their staff extremely well.

We are working to a tight timeframe – but we have all acknowledged that it is right we address this issue with urgency.

The publication of the final proposal will balance the need for fast action with the need for due diligence.

The working group, including staff representatives, are considering the timetable carefully, and aim to report back to the House before the House rises for Christmas recess.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you and the Speaker have said that you hope all parties will live up to their responsibilities by demonstrating both an appetite for change and a practical means of delivering that change.

That is exactly what we intend to do and I want to thank all parties for working together in a supportive fashion. We share this duty to bring about positive change.

People come to work in this place for a number of reasons – out of public service, to support the party of their choice, or to gain new work experience.

Nothing should deter them from pursuing those ambitions, and I know we are all determined to ensure that this is a safe and fair place to work.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Press release: Joint statement by the governments of France and the UK

Home Secretary Amber Rudd and the Minister of the Interior of France, Gérard Collomb, met in London today (Thursday 16 November). They discussed a range of home affairs matters including joint efforts to fight terrorism, illegal migration, border security and efforts to tackle serious and organised crime.

The ministers emphasised the need to maintain and strengthen bilateral cooperation on security and law enforcement co-operation. On counter-terrorism they reinforced their commitment to the British-French action plan to ensure the internet is not used as a safe space for terrorists. The ministers recognised that the internet companies are making progress, but committed to push them to go further and faster in taking down terrorist material online – in particular to ensure it is removed within one to two

hours of upload – and to continue to develop technical solutions to tackle the issue.

On migration, the ministers discussed the situation in Northern France and the challenges linked to illegal migration. The ministers acknowledged the importance of UK support in reinforcing the security arrangements in coastal cities of Northern France and the need for continued efforts to manage jointly the shared border between the UK and France. The UK and France will also explore ways of improving cooperating on efforts in countries of origin and transit in Africa and Asia.

Minister Collomb also visited Brixton Police Station to see the work of the Metropolitan Police.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd and the Minister of Interior Gérard Collomb are committed to continued close and constructive cooperation between the UK and France on these issues and to preparing together for the Franco-British Summit to be held in January 2018.

Press release: Change of British High Commissioner to Rwanda

2015 – present Windhoek, British High Commissioner 2011 – 2015 Sarajevo, Deputy Head of Mission 2009 FCO, Head, Global Response Centre 2008 FCO, Team Leader, FCO Response Centre 2006 – 2008 FCO, Internal Communication Team Leader & Leadership Conference Project Manager 2001 – 2006 Geneva, UK Mission to the UN, Second Secretary 1997 – 2000 Damascus, Third Secretary 1997 Baghdad UNSCOM, Press Officer/Special Assistant to the Director 1995 – 1997 Arabic language training 1993 – 1995 FCO, Desk Officer, United Nations Department