

Press release: Troika statement on South Sudan

The members of the Troika (Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States) reiterate their strong support for the combined efforts of the African Union (AU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and United Nations to end the conflict in South Sudan, and join in their recent calls on all armed parties, including the Government of South Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition, and other armed groups, to commit to a ceasefire. The Troika welcomes the recent commitment by President Kiir to IGAD leaders to announce a unilateral ceasefire by government forces, and it calls upon him to ensure that his order is carried out immediately and in full effect.

The Troika underlines that the dire humanitarian crisis in South Sudan is the direct result of the conflict and demands that all parties cease violence against humanitarian workers and obstruction of humanitarian assistance. Military offensives and the obstruction of lifesaving assistance must stop immediately in order to end the suffering and severe food shortages inflicted upon millions across South Sudan.

The Troika reiterates that there is no military solution to this conflict and that a durable end to the conflict will require a political process involving all the principal parties. An inclusive national dialogue, deemed credible by the South Sudanese people, could provide a means to redress root causes of conflict and build a true national consensus. As President Kiir committed in announcing the planned national dialogue, it should supplement, and not replace, the core elements of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

The Troika endorses the ongoing efforts of AU High Representative Alpha Konaré and UN Special Envoy Nicholas Haysom to encourage all parties to end fighting and engage in peaceful dialogue. It also fully supports Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission Chairperson Festus Mogae's work towards a truly inclusive and effective process to implement the Agreement. In addition, the Troika endorses the work of the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan, and the deployment of its Regional Protection Force. Lastly, the Troika notes the importance of breaking the cycle of impunity, and encourages further progress by the AU toward the rapid establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan.

Further information

The Great Repeal Bill: Welsh economy needs certainty, clarity and reassurance – Carwyn Jones

The final bill will set out one of the largest and most complex legislative projects in British history. However, the First Minister is demanding that the UK government must not lose sight of the needs of businesses, workers and potential investors in order to protect the Welsh economy.

The First Minister said:

“We stand ready to work with the UK government to help make the Great Repeal Bill succeed and ensure it provides the clarity and reassurance the Welsh economy urgently needs.

“The process of incorporating thousands of EU rules into UK legislation may sound like a mere bureaucratic process but, in reality, each law will have a direct impact on the people of Wales, our employers and potential investors. It is crucial we get this right.

“Uncertainty restricts economic growth and so it is vital disruption is kept to a minimum to help keep confidence in the economy and protect Welsh jobs.”

The First Minister also expressed disappointment that the Welsh Government was not directly involved in contributing to the white paper, adding:

“While the white paper talks about increasing the decision-making power of devolved administrations, it is not clear that we share a similar view of where powers currently lie and how we should proceed in the future.

“We have been clear we see benefit in agreeing common UK approaches on some policy areas that are devolved where this is important for the functioning of the UK market, provided that these are agreed by the UK government and all 3 devolved administrations and are subject to independent dispute resolution mechanisms. The starting point for such common approaches and frameworks must be through agreement and consensus.

“In discussions we have had so far, the UK government have assured us they share this view – how the white paper is now taken forward will be the opportunity to demonstrate a real commitment to those warm words.

“The final bill, when it comes forward, must respect and protect devolution. This is what the people of Wales voted for in 1997 and again 2011. We will continue our discussions with the UK government to ensure that the bill does not ride roughshod over the devolution settlement and brings clarity to our future.”

Press release: Home Secretary statement: meeting with Communication Service Providers

My starting point is pretty straightforward. I don't think that people who want to do us harm should be able to use the internet or social media to do so. I want to make sure we are doing everything we can to stop this.

It was a useful discussion and I'm glad to see that progress has been made.

We focused on the issue of access to terrorist propaganda online and the very real and evolving threat it poses.

I said I wanted to see this tackled head-on and I welcome the commitment from the key players to set up a cross-industry forum that will help to do this.

In taking forward this work I'd like to see the industry to go further and faster in not only removing online terrorist content but stopping it going up in the first place. I'd also like to see more support for smaller and emerging platforms to do this as well, so they can no longer be seen as an alternative shop floor by those who want to do us harm.

Speech: Value Valparaíso

First I would like to thank the many people in Chile, including the President, the Government of Chile, many of our business, military, and other contacts, and many members of the general public who have sent messages of condolence and support following the terrible attack in London. An attack on innocent people. An attack at the heart of our great global city. An attack on the heart of our society and our values of liberty, freedom and democracy. An attack which affected people of many nations – people from 11 countries were killed or injured, which reflects the nature of London as a global, multicultural hub, a welcoming place to all. The support from here in Chile

and elsewhere around the world shows that we can come together and build a stronger community and a better world.

And in coming together here today, I hope that in a small way, we can contribute to building stronger links between our two countries. Thank you all for coming along today to talk about heritage and urban development. This is not about heritage for the sake of history. It is about how, if we value heritage, we can create value from it, and contribute to a better society, a better urban space, and a better quality of life for citizens.

I would like to thank some of the many people and organisations who have made this seminar happen and brought us together today including:

- Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes
- Ilustre Municipalidad de Valparaíso y su Alcalde Jorge Sharp
- Comisión de Desarrollo Patrimonial a través del Concejal Daniel Morales
- Fundación Piensa y Metropolitica
- Armada de Chile y el Museo Marítimo
- British Council
- Colleagues from the British Embassy – Marianne Becker, Paula Orellana and Francisca Muñoz.

The idea for this seminar originated from another tragedy. The Great Fire of Valparaíso, in 2014. At that time the worst fire in the history of Chile – although sadly we have seen swathes of Chile devastated by fire in recent weeks.

I first came here to Valparaíso shortly after my arrival in 2014 to commemorate 200 years of the Battle of Valparaíso – a conflict about free trade. A topic as pertinent then as it is today. And just as then, about promoting economic links, with Valparaíso as a great port, and the potential to be a hub at the heart of globalisation. And I am glad to say London has been in the news here in Chile this week for different reasons to terrorism. The news that Chile Day will take place in London for the seventh year running, on 29/30 June, to promote Chile, free trade and investment, in London, as the best city in the world to do business.

In visiting Valparaíso I was surprised to find the striking British Arch, and so many other historic buildings in Valparaíso that once had links to the UK. The iconic arch was, of course donated by the British community to mark the centenary of Chile's independence.

Soon after my first visit, the terrible fires took place and I returned to talk to the bomberos and the authorities here to try to understand more about what had happened. The overriding image of that very difficult time for the city, was one of community. Of people from many different sections of society coming together to help one another, at a time of adversity. People also told me of some of the difficulties and challenges of this city, of community tensions, of poverty, of housing, of a city with past glory. Of a city where there are many plans and projects, but where progress is needed to benefit people. It made me think of cities in the UK where we have also faced similar challenges.

I have come back here many times. Sometimes for meetings and events with the Armada de Chile, for whose help, including today, I am ever grateful. Sometimes to see the local authorities or universities. Sometimes just as a private individual, or with friends, to enjoy a very different place to Santiago. And I have brought many visitors here, including of course HRH Prince Harry in 2014, and more recently HRH Prince Edward. Yesterday and the day before, the British Council and British Embassy organised here in Valparaiso the Pacific Alliance seminar on innovation, bringing together experts from Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and the UK to discuss ways to fuel innovation. This vibrant, diverse, individualistic city stimulates creativity, draws people here and makes them want to come back.

Last year the Embassy was awarded a small amount of extra money, in recognition of some of the work we had done to further links between the UK and Chile. For once, I had complete discretion over how the money should be spent. (Normally the limited funds that we do have, come with very tight rules on scope and criteria). I felt it was important to use these new funds for something outside Santiago, where we already had a number of projects. Also to do something that was beyond the normal range of Embassy work. I talked to people here and we came up with the idea of exchanging ideas and experiences about using heritage in urban development. Hence this seminar

That is not to say we have the answers in the UK. Quite the contrary. We have many experiences on how difficult this can be, and sometimes it has gone wrong. But there have been some successes. But always it is a work in progress. Because any city is about an evolving space. A changing environment to meet the needs of the people. Developing areas to bring greater economic benefits. And increasingly, the need to protect and make the most of the environment. But there is something more.

Something intangible. Something which speaks to the spirit, and relating to identity and self expression, and connecting to what is around you – about valuing what you have. Which in turn, can create value – to attract more businesses, generate more jobs, bring more money to a city, which in turn can improve housing, urban spaces, benefit people and also create a new urban environment in which creativity can flourish.

I am delighted to welcome to this seminar our two speakers from the UK – Duncan MacCullum and Philip Davies – who will share with you some ideas and experiences, drawing on some examples of British cities, including Liverpool, which has a long shared history with this city of Valparaiso. Both are great ports of the world.

I should also say that the UK team are here just as facilitators . We are not here to present or promote any particular project on Valparaiso. I know that there are a number of possible projects under consideration. There are strong views on what should happen. It is not for us to input one way or the other. Nor do we have funds for follow up work. This is a one off chance for such a seminar. So over to you on how you want to make best use of this opportunity.

The aim of today is to talk about examples of creating a 'Culture of Value'.i.e . valuing the heritage around you, and sharing experiences of how

preserving and rescuing heritage can help transform a city landscape: sharing examples of how heritage can be used to create a 'Value Offer' to bring economic benefits, through tourism, urban development and social development; and to talk about practical steps to 'Realise Value' – how to turn a vision into change for a better city.

We are here to learn more about your experiences and offer up some examples of similar challenges in the UK. I hope that the presentations this morning stimulate dialogue and ideas on how best to 'Value Valparaiso'. So, most of all, welcome to you.

Staggering that Grayling thinks the growing revolving door scandal around HS2 is 'not a massive issue' – McDonald

Andy

McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, commenting on the Government's refusal to set up an inquiry into the cancellation of HS2 Ltd's £170 million contract with engineering firm CH2M, said:

"I'm staggered Chris Grayling thinks the growing revolving door scandal over HS2 Ltd, CH2M and a £170m contract is 'not a massive issue.'

"The fact both HS2 Ltd's Chief Executive and his predecessor previously worked for CH2M and a former HS2 Chief of Staff worked on the winning bid for CH2M should have rung alarm bells at the Department for Transport

"Now HS2's Director General has resigned and Phase 2 could be delayed even further.

"This whole business stinks to high heaven, and the Department for Transport must urgently address the key questions. When did it know about these substantial conflicts of interest and what due diligence did it do on the bid?"

Ends