

Only Labour will rewrite the rules of our economy and deliver the investment needed to rebuild and transform our country – John McDonnell

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow

Chancellor, commenting on today's growth forecast from the Bank of England, said:

"While we welcome today's growth forecasts, projections for wage growth in coming years have been cut. This will come as little surprise to those whose incomes are still below where they were ten years ago as a result of a rigged economy under the Tories.

"Yesterday the Resolution Foundation warned of the worst period of income growth for middle and low earners since the 1960s. After seven years of Tory failure, there is little sign of an end to the pressure on living standards for most of the population."

"Only Labour will rewrite the rules of our economy and deliver the investment needed to rebuild and transform our country so that no one and no community is left behind."

This White Paper is a wish list, not an action plan – Keir Starmer

Keir

Starmer MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, speaking after the release of the Government's Brexit White Paper, said:

"Today's White Paper is indicative of the Government's whole approach to Brexit.

"For months they have refused to publish a plan or allow proper scrutiny, and when they are finally forced to produce a White Paper it is rushed, limited and not well thought through.

"The White Paper offers no certainty for EU citizens living in the UK, no additional detail on how workers' and consumer rights will be protected, and nothing on how full tariff-free access to the single market will be delivered.

"It's a wish list, not an action plan.

"Labour has said throughout that there needs to be accountability and scrutiny throughout the Brexit process.

"Next week we will debate amendments to the Article 50 Bill that would achieve that – in particular by guaranteeing a meaningful vote that ensures our Parliament votes on the Article 50 deal before the European Parliament does. The Government should welcome that, not reject it".

[Sarah Champion responds to Government's failure to provide assurances on funding for revenge porn helpline](#)

Sarah Champion MP, Labour's Shadow

Secretary of State for Women and Equalities, responding to the Government's failure to provide assurances that it will continue to fund the national revenge porn helpline, said:

"Once again, the Tories are all talk but no action when protecting women and girls from violence.

"The revenge porn helpline is an invaluable resource for victims who are desperate to receive advice on how to have indecent images removed from the internet and how to pursue a prosecution if they so choose.

"Coming forward as a survivor of revenge porn takes such bravery and we need to send the message that those victims will be supported in every way possible.

“Labour is urging the Government to maintain this vital, value-for-money service. Ministers must now clarify and publish their continued funding arrangements for the helpline.”

[Debbie Abrahams responds to Government's 'Fuller Working Lives' strategy](#)

Debbie Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the Government's 'Fuller Working Lives' strategy, said:

“It's right that the Government is taking steps to boost employment for older people.

“However, more than half a million workers aged over 50 rely on in-work support – and that support is at risk of being rolled back through Universal Credit.

“That's why Labour is calling on the Tories to reverse cuts to Universal Credit, which could see some older workers worse off by £2,600 a year.”

[News story: UK scales up humanitarian relief efforts in Somalia](#)

[UK scales up humanitarian relief efforts in Somalia](#)

Millions of people are living in desperate conditions in Somalia as extreme drought is threatening the lives and stability of a country vital to regional and UK security.

Ms Patel led a roundtable with humanitarian partners during her visit, to hear about the drought situation on the ground, how they are responding to it, and to discuss how the UK and international community can work together to save lives and prevent a catastrophic famine.

The 2015/16 El Nino is one of the strongest on record and has severely

impacted Africa. In Somalia, conditions are worsening with daily reports of rivers drying up, crops failing, and people and livestock dying. As many as 3.9 million people need urgent assistance and 320,000 children are severely malnourished.

In the face of these famine-like conditions Ms Patel announced a UK package of support, which will provide:

- food for 60,000 people;
- urgent nutrition support for 240,000 children and pregnant women;
- safe water for 180,000 people;
- access to health service for 75,000 people; and
- vaccinations for 3 million animals.

Priti Patel said:

Millions of people are living in desperate conditions as extreme drought threatens the lives and stability of a country vital to regional and UK security.

I urge our international partners to join forces with Global Britain and provide immediate support for the relief effort.

Building a secure, stable and prosperous Somalia is a top priority for the UK and while great progress has been made, significant challenges remain. Together in partnership we can meet those challenges.

Ms Patel also sought the humanitarian partners' commitment to the London Somalia Conference objectives and to agree to work together to ensure it will address the drought response and deliver the international support needed to resolve Somalia's protracted crises.

The UK is playing a leading role in the wider international response to the ongoing drought in East Africa – where people desperately need the UK's support.

After visiting Somalia, Ms Patel attended a humanitarian panel discussion in Ethiopia with the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, and the Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister, Demeke Mekonnen.

Ms Patel highlighted that humanitarian reform is one of the top priorities for the UK and that she is committed to making the international system more effective at responding to global challenges that pose risks to both Africa and the UK. This is to ensure support is maximised to those affected by crisis and guaranteeing value for money.

The International Development Secretary also emphasised her concerns for people suffering from the Horn of Africa drought in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya and urged humanitarian partners to accelerate joint efforts for an early response that will save lives.

Ms Patel outlined that increased UK support is helping 800,000 people in Ethiopia including:

- emergency nutrition treatment for 25,000 malnourished children;
- clean water for 100,000 people; and
- vaccination and treatment for 600,000 cattle.