

Speech: EU8 Joint Statement on Ukraine

I would like to make the following statement today on behalf of the five EU Members of the Security Council (France, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the UK), and Italy, Belgium and Germany, as former and future EU Members of the Security Council, which demonstrates the continuity of the EU's position on Ukraine.

We as Member States of the European Union fully support the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognised borders.

We condemn the illegitimate "elections" planned for 11 November in the non-government controlled territories of the so-called "Luhansk People's Republic" and "Donetsk People's Republic". If held, these illegitimate "elections" would contravene commitments made under the Minsk agreements and violate Ukrainian law. Any such illegal elections would be incompatible with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We call on the international community to stand united in opposing these illegitimate "elections" that can only serve to undermine efforts to achieve peace in the region. We urge the separatists to abandon the plans for "elections" and call on Russia to bring its considerable influence to bear to stop the "elections" from taking place.

We welcome the renewal of the special status law in the Ukrainian Rada. We urge all sides, particularly the Russian-backed separatists, to commit to full implementation of the Minsk Agreements, beginning with a comprehensive ceasefire and withdrawal of heavy weaponry. We fully support the efforts within the Normandy format for implementing the Minsk Agreements.

We remain convinced that a peaceful resolution of the conflict is possible. Only progress on the diplomatic front will bring us to a point where legitimate and credible elections can be held in eastern Ukraine in line with the Minsk agreements.

Russia must play its part by ending its financial and military support to the separatists and withdrawing its armed forces and military equipment from Ukrainian territory.

We also express our concern regarding the degraded humanitarian situation in the conflict area, particularly as the winter season approaches. We also urge all parties to the conflict to re-establish full access of all international humanitarian organisations to the non-government controlled areas and to allow smooth and speedy delivery of humanitarian assistance in line with humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law.

Press release: Progress towards Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy unveiled

Business Secretary Greg Clark and Greater Manchester's Deputy Mayor for the Economy Richard Leese have today (30 October) set out progress towards a Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, one of the UK's first Local Industrial Strategies.

Developed in collaboration with regional partners, the Local Industrial Strategy for Greater Manchester will harness the regions distinctive strengths and build on them in areas like health research and advanced materials to unlock growth and boost people's earning power across the region's cities and places.

Once launched, the Local Industrial Strategy will capitalise on Greater Manchester's long and established history of entrepreneurship and enterprise, its devolved health and social care budget of £6 billion per annum and its position as home to one of the largest graduate pools in Europe.

The [progress statement](#) published today showcases the work that has been done so far by local leaders in the Northern Powerhouse who are working with the government and businesses to identify economic opportunities that the region can seize in the years to come.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

To unlock the potential of areas up and down the country it is essential that key decisions and resources are taken from Westminster and given to our great cities, towns and their supporting regions.

The Local Industrial Strategy we are developing will embody the unique spirit of Greater Manchester with a long-term plan to build on its exceptional strengths in areas including technology and research and ensure it is at the forefront of growing industries like clean growth and AI.

Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, said:

To allow Greater Manchester to thrive and drive productivity and prosperity we need to make sure there are good jobs, a skilled workforce and businesses are supported, and this is what the plan is about.

We want to use the strategy to build on Greater Manchester's unique

legacy of industrial ambition and creativity to create a thriving, digitally-enabled green city. We want to work with businesses on the strategy to create an innovative plan that improves the lives of everyone who lives and works here.

Government committed to Local Industrial Strategies as part of its Industrial Strategy White Paper, building on the strong foundations of our city, growth and devolution deals to work in partnership with local leaders to drive productivity. All parts of England are now working to develop them by early 2020.

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry MP, said:

It's great to see such progress being made in the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy. With government working closely together with businesses, local leaders and partners, we're in a great position to boost economic growth and productivity across Greater Manchester and the whole of the Northern Powerhouse.

Greater Manchester's Deputy Mayor for the Economy, Richard Leese, said:

The Local Industrial Strategy is a unique opportunity to spread the benefits of prosperity across the city-region and we want to use this to deliver inclusive growth and quality employment.

We have a proven track record in Greater Manchester of collaboration and innovation and using the opportunities of devolution to drive change and the Local Industrial Strategy is another way for us to do this. We want to make sure we put together the right plan for Greater Manchester and will be working with businesses, voluntary sectors and residents on it.

Once launched, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy will provide a long-term plan for alignment of local and national decision making to increase productivity and deliver an economy that works for all.

This will include setting out how the health innovation sector and Greater Manchester's unique devolution deal will drive the UK's response to the Ageing Society Grand Challenge, and Greater Manchester's efforts to meet the Clean Growth Grand Challenge following the Mayor's Green Summit earlier this year.

The progress statement follows the government having confirmed that £3 million will be invested to help strengthen digital skills in Greater Manchester and the surrounding areas. The funding announced in the Budget will see the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) team up

with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) for the pilot project.

Employers and training providers will identify which digital skills are in short supply in the local area and design a targeted approach that can help people prepare to move into digital roles.

Greater Manchester is the largest digital cluster outside of London in the UK with almost 8,000 digital businesses employing more than 80,000 people.

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[News story: RAF medics transfer UN hospital in South Sudan to Vietnamese](#)



British personnel take down a flag as they hand over the hospital to their Vietnamese partners. Crown copyright.

A team of 30 RAF medics have been deployed to the hospital as part of Operation TRENTON since July 2018, and will now train the Vietnamese unit on how to run a field hospital, before transferring organisation of the hospital over to them and returning to the UK.

The UN field hospital was initially established early in 2017 and has provided medical care to over 1,800 UN military personnel and civilian staff.

British personnel take down a flag as they hand over the hospital to their Vietnamese partners. Crown copyright.

Warrant Officer Naya Heseltine said:

It's a poignant part of the UN Peacekeeping mission for the UK to handover responsibility of the Role 2 Hospital to the Vietnamese. For us, it has been a momentous occasion and a privilege to have been a part of the first RAF hospital deployment in 27 years.

The UK Engineer Task Force began building a bespoke Level 2 hospital earlier in 2018, of which the Vietnamese Hospital Unit will move into from their temporary tented hospital soon.

The Vietnamese troops who are taking over the running of the field hospital from the UK.

Published 30 October 2018

[News story: New Regional Schools Commissioner appointed for the West Midlands](#)

Andrew Warren, Chair of the Teaching Schools Council and Executive Director of Manor Teaching School in Wolverhampton, has been named as the new Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for the West Midlands.

He will be responsible for overseeing academies in the region – using his local expertise to monitor their performance to ensure children receive the best possible education. He is taking over from Christine Quinn who will retire at the end of the year.

Andrew Warren will start in early 2019, working with interim National Schools Commissioner Dominic Herrington to help raise standards in the growing number of academies in the West Midlands.

Andrew Warren said:

I'm very excited about the opportunities and potential of this new role as Regional Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands.

I have been a headteacher and system leader in this region since 1994 and I am really looking forward to working with my RSC team and school leaders to ensure that every child goes to a great school. That was my aim as a teacher, a headteacher, Chair of the Teaching Schools Council, and now soon to be RSC.

I will miss my inspirational colleagues from Manor Primary and the Teaching Schools Council from whom I have learnt so much and I wish them all the very best as they continue to raise the bar for our children and young people.

Interim National Schools Commissioner Dominic Herrington said:

I am really pleased to confirm that Andrew is joining my team as the new Regional Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands.

Andrew was selected from a field of strong applicants and will bring a wealth of experience to the role, having spent his career working hard to improve the life chances of young people in schools across the region – he is a very capable replacement for Christine Quinn and I'm looking forward to working with him.

Regional Schools Commissioners' responsibilities include:

- taking decisions on the creation of new academies;
- monitoring their performance and improving underperforming academies;
- ensuring there is a strong supply of excellent sponsors to work with underperforming schools in the region; and
- encouraging and supporting high-quality applications for new free schools.

The West Midlands commissioner oversees over 1,000 academies and free schools across the region.

Andrew Warren will be advised by a board of headteachers of outstanding-rated academies or experienced educational leaders. The board challenges and supports the work of the commissioner, bringing additional educational insight and local intelligence to decision-making.