

News story: Chair and Chief Executive Designates appointed to UK Trade Remedies Authority

The Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade, the Rt. Hon Dr. Liam Fox MP, has today appointed Sir David Wright, the UK's former Ambassador to Japan and Korea, to DIT as Chair Designate of the UK Trade Remedies Authority (TRA), which will serve to protect the UK's industries from harmful or unfair trade after we leave the European Union.

Sir David previously served as Chief Executive of British Trade International – later known as UK Trade and Investment.

Department for International Trade Permanent Secretary, Antonia Romeo, has also announced that Claire Bassett, currently Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission and formerly of the Parole Board for England and Wales, has been appointed TRA Chief Executive Designate after an open Civil Service recruitment process. Claire will be leaving her role at the Electoral Commission.

Based in Reading, the TRA will be a UK-wide body responsible for investigating claims of harmful or unfair trading practices by businesses abroad, including dumping products on the UK market. Where these are found, the TRA will propose measures to remove any injury suffered by UK industry, with a final decision taken by the Secretary of State.

Welcoming their appointment, International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

The TRA will protect UK industry against unfair trading practices, so it is in our national interest to ensure it is set up and appropriately staffed now in the case of no deal.

That is why I am calling for all opposition parties in both the House of Commons and Lords to give support to the Trade Bill to ensure no parts of the UK or UK industries are at risk of being unprotected.

So, I am delighted to welcome Sir David and Claire as Chair and Chief Executive Designates to the TRA, which will take the reins on protecting British industry as we leave the European Union.

I have the utmost confidence in their vast experience and I am certain they will do an excellent job in supporting UK businesses, ensuring that our trade with the world remains fair as well as free.

Chair Designate of the TRA, Sir David Wright said:

The TRA will support UK businesses in the international trading environment.

This is something I've been doing throughout my career, both in government and in the private sector, and protecting British businesses and jobs from harmful or unfair trading practices will be my key priority.

I'm delighted to be appointed as Chair Designate of the TRA and I am ready to start building this crucial organisation, alongside a strong team.

Chief Executive Designate of the TRA, Claire Bassett said:

As we build our independent trade policy for the UK, it's important that we continue to protect our domestic industries against harmful or unfair trading practices.

So, it's a real honour to be appointed as Chief Executive Designate of the TRA. I am very much looking forward to working with Sir David Wright and the new team to set up this exciting new body and begin doing its important work.

Trade remedy measures support free trade by ensuring it is also based on rules, in accordance with the UK's international obligations to the World Trade Organisation and traditions. These ensure that UK industry is not left unprotected against these unfair trading practices.

The appointees will take up their posts in the coming months, and will be focused on establishing the TRA in preparation from the UK's departure from the European Union in March next year.

Notes to Editor:

About Sir David Wright:

- Sir David presents an outstanding profile in international and bilateral trade policy. His distinguished career includes serving as the UK's former ambassador to both the Republic of Korea and Japan. He was the first Chief Executive of British Trade International and, subsequently, UK Trade and Investment.
- Sir David also brings an impressive non-executive record, having served as Vice-Chairman of Barclays Capital until March 2018.

About Claire Bassett:

- Claire offers extensive public body leadership experience, having most

recently served as Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission. Prior to that, she was Chief Executive of both the Parole Board for England and Wales and the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

[Press release: PM call with Prime Minister Mehdi of Iraq: 26 October 2018](#)



A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The Prime Minister held a telephone call with the new Prime Minister of Iraq, Adil Abdul Mehdi, this afternoon to congratulate him on taking office.

They agreed to continue to work together as Prime Minister Mehdi aimed to build a successful future for the people of Iraq.

They agreed the UK and Iraq were significant security partners, particularly in the ongoing fight against Daesh.

They noted that Iraq had an important role to play in the region.

They looked forward to meeting in the future.

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Speech: Facing a Grave Challenge to International Peace and Security

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Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you to Staffan [de Mistura] and his team for briefing us today.

Mr President, I find it incredible that we should have to rehearse for the benefit of the Syrian authorities why the UN needs to be involved in Syria.

It isn't a matter of national sovereignty that there are over a million refugees.

It isn't a matter of national sovereignty that there are 400,000 dead in Syria.

This is a threat to international peace and security.

It is right that the UN is involved. The UN has been involved on the humanitarian side. It's involved on the refugee side. It's involved in the health side. It is absolutely front and centre right that it should be involved in the political process.

So I will go further than you, Staffan; you talked about a serious challenge. I think we actually face a grave challenge. We face a grave challenge to the way members of the United Nations cooperate with the United Nations. And as my American and French colleagues have said, we face a grave challenge in terms of the situation on the ground.

And there's now additionally enormous doubt over what Sochi was and what it now represents. Either Russia has given the UN and this Council assurances it has proved too weak to deliver on, or it was all a cynical smokescreen designed to divert attention and energy while Russia, Syria and Iran prosecuted the military campaign. And that military campaign has been brought to a halt only by the international outrage at the threat to three million civilians in Idlib, and then the Turks bravely stepped in and brokered an agreement designed to protect those civilians.

So I think we need five things in support of what my French and American colleagues have said. We need clarity on the status of the Sochi agreement and these new proposals from the Syrian authorities. What do they mean? What does Russia, what do Iran think about them? We need clarity on what steps need to be taken by all the players before 19 November when Staffan you've offered to come back and brief the Council, and before the end of November when you step down. We need clarity that Russia – as a P5 member, an Astana guarantor, and the Sochi convener – along with Syria and Iran – will work constructively and tirelessly with the UN.

All UN members have a responsibility to support you, Staffan, as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy. We need to hear today that that promise of constructive, tireless, dedicated engagement to bring this conflict to an end is there. We need the agreement on Idlib to hold. We need that opportunity that others have mentioned to be seized. We need the Constitutional Committee to be convened and I share the views of my American and French colleagues on that. We need humanitarian access to be improved, and we need 2254 to be upheld. The Council needs to come together to support the political process. Without the political process, this dreadful conflict will never truly end, whatever happens militarily on the ground.

We look forward to further reports after the international meetings in the coming days, but I do believe Mr President that we must hear today from all Council members that they will support the UN as it tries its very best to move the political process forward.

Thank you.

[Press release: Greater protection for renters thanks to plans to tighten tenant safety](#)

- Minister announces plans to tighten health and safety standards for rental accommodation – ensuring all tenants have a safe place to call home.
- Move to clampdown on small minority of rogue landlords who turn a blind-eye to dangerous conditions – including the possibility of minimum health and safety standards.
- Action to ensure carbon monoxide rules are fit for purpose – protecting people from the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Renters are to receive greater protection thanks to plans announced by Housing Minister Heather Wheeler MP which will overhaul health and safety standards for rental accommodation – helping to keep safe the minority of private tenants who currently live in unsatisfactory conditions.

While the vast majority of landlords are responsible owners who take great pride in the properties they lease to their tenants, some private renters live in sub-standard homes with problems such as inadequate heating and damp.

Under current rules, councils are required to ensure rental properties in their area meet important safety standards using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and are able to force criminal landlords to take action where tenants are languishing in unsafe accommodation.

Yet the system hasn't been updated in over 12 years, and a new review of the system will consider whether it should be updated and if so, to what extent. The review will also look at whether to introduce minimum standards for common health and safety problems in rental accommodation in order to keep renters safe.

Today's measures build on government action to drive up standards in the rental sector – making sure tenants are living in safe and secure properties; cracking down on the small minority of landlords that are renting out unsafe and substandard accommodation; and ensuring the housing market works for everyone.

Housing Minister Heather Wheeler MP said:

Everyone has a right to feel safe and secure in their own home.

These reviews will allow us to revisit the current systems for health and safety ratings and carbon monoxide alarms to ensure that both are fit for purpose and meeting the needs of tenants.

By looking again at these rules, we can make sure that they are working as they should to keep people safe and give them peace of mind in their homes.

Ministers have also outlined further detail of the [review into carbon monoxide alarm requirements in the home](#), to help ensure people remain safe from this silent killer.

There are currently around 8 million carbon monoxide alarms in homes across England, with current rules stating that alarms must be fitted in privately rented homes with solid fuel appliances and when solid fuel stoves and boilers are installed.

The review will judge whether legislation goes far enough in keeping people safe from the risks of carbon monoxide in their homes, and whether there should be a blanket requirement to install alarms for other methods of heating, including gas and oil, and to social housing.

Ministers will also consider new research including technological improvements and the falling costs of carbon monoxide alarms and whether this supports a case to extend requirements.

The news demonstrates ongoing government work to support people to feel safe and secure in their home.

Ministers have also introduced tough new powers for councils to tackle the small minority of rogue landlords who rent out overcrowded properties, including fines of up to £30,000 for those landlords who do not comply.

The [Tenant Fees Bill](#), currently making its way through Parliament, will also bring an end to unnecessary, costly fees imposed by landlords or property agents – stopping tenants being charged hundreds of pounds for minor fixes to their homes and putting cash back in their pockets.

Together, the measures will make sure the housing market works for everyone by making renting fair and more transparent for all.

The [Housing health and safety rating system](#) is used by local authorities to assess health and safety in residential properties – this includes both private rental properties and council/housing association properties.