

# Speech: Ending the Syrian Conflict

Thank you very much Mr President, and welcome back to New York.

Thank you to our two briefers, the Special Representative and the Under Secretary-General. And can I repeat the thanks of colleagues for everything your teams do on the ground to help the people of Syria. They need you more than ever, but we are very conscious that this is a very difficult job for them to do.

The conflict is seven and a half years old. It's longer than the Second World War. Over half a million people have died in Syria. Millions have been displaced and chemical weapons have been used, including by the Syrian regime. I think we're running out of superlatives, Mr President, to describe the horrors of this conflict. We meet every month on Syria in this chamber, but this time does feel particularly important. The Turkish plan which they have discussed with the Russians for Idlib, is the crux. It needs to be developed and it needs to be implemented. And as other speakers have said Mr President, Russia in particular needs to uphold it, and we look to Russia to do this because Russia is a P5 member with particular responsibilities for international peace and security and Russia needs to exert her influence on the Syrian authorities. Otherwise, the crimes that are committed against the Syrian people are committed in Russia's name.

We heard earlier, Mr President, about the voices of Idlib. There are 3 million voices in Idlib who will want to know why the Idlib plan cannot be implemented. There are 18 million voices in Syria who want the Council to act to protect them.

A lot has been said today Mr President, some of it very familiar. Some of it common to those Council members who have spoken. I will not rehearse some of the assessments, but I would just like to go on record as saying that the United Kingdom agrees with our American, our Dutch, our Swedish, our Polish and other partners in their assessments. We wholly agree with them.

I want to highlight in particular four points. First of all, I want to agree with what the Representative of France said about the situation on the ground but also what he said about the French, Americans and British taking our responsibilities if chemical weapons are ever used again.

I want to talk about the political process. We want to see the constitutional committee convened. We look to the Special Representative to do this. We believe you have all the authority you need to pick those names. We trust you to do the best you can in the interests of the people of Syria and in the interests of peace. We look for a date to be set and we ask you to report back to this Council by 31 October. We look to the Small Group and the Astana Group to make progress on coming together in support of the United Nations. And I repeat what my Dutch and Swedish colleagues had said about reconstruction money. There are 3 million voices in Idlib and 18 million voices in Syria as a whole who will want to know why progress can't be made

on the political track.

Turning to humanitarian: we would like to hear from the Syrian representative why there are still problems with access and why there are still problems with safe passage that the Under Secretary-General referred to.

I noted what the Representative of Equatorial Guinea said about scorched earth. This is a truly terrible situation, but he is right to draw attention to that and we would like to know what the Syrian regime is doing to put that right.

A large number of speakers, Mr President, talked about IHL and the principles of precaution, discrimination and proportionality. We absolutely uphold those as the United Kingdom. It is unbelievable that hospitals are being attacked. It's even more unbelievable when those hospitals are part of a de-conflicted area.

Last week Mr President, the United Kingdom announced some \$40 million for Idlib. We hope that will help, but I just wanted to go back to what the Under Secretary-General said about is it a reprieve or a stay of execution. This is a dreadful choice, but it has to be a reprieve. There are 3 million voices in Idlib and 18 million voices in Syria who will want to know why this can't happen.

Turning to the wider issues Mr President, awful and horrific as Syrian conflict is, the prospect of a wider interstate war is waiting in the wings. The Syrian people are not only attacked by their own government, they risk being drawn in and the victims of a wider conflict. It is not legitimate to use the territory of Syria to fire missiles at Israel. The risk of miscalculation, a misunderstanding that led to the downing of a Russian aircraft encapsulates on a small scale the much bigger and even more frightening risk of a wider miscalculation. And I would like to, at this point, echo the colleagues who have sent their condolences to our Russian colleagues for the loss of their air crew. But I repeat, the risk of miscalculation is incredibly high. It was a Syrian air force that shot down that Russian plane and the proximate cause was the actions of Iran and Hezbollah on the ground. This ought to serve as a very powerful warning not just to the Syrian authorities but also to the Russians and the Iranians of the prospect of something much wider and even more horrible than we have yet seen in Syria.

Lastly Mr President, the Special Representative referred to Kofi Annan and we will have a tribute to Kofi Annan in the United Nations later this week. This morning, a wreath was laid to Dag Hammerskjöld, who is also one of the iconic Secretaries-General that the UN has been fortunate enough to have lead it. I think we do them no credit, Mr. President, if we allow this conflict to continue. The best legacy we could hand Kofi Annan in response to all his work in 2012 – I was present for that Geneva meeting – the best legacy we could offer is to bring the Syrian conflict to an end and help the Syrian people.

Thank you Mr President.

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## Speech: PM speech at London Fashion Week reception: 18 September 2018

Thank you Stephanie and welcome everyone. I am truly delighted to be hosting this reception to celebrate London Fashion Week.

I want to thank Stephanie Phair, Caroline Rush – and everyone at the British Fashion Council – for their fantastic work in championing British fashion and London Fashion Week. And of course the designers, the models, the assistants, the set designers and all those without whom it would not be such a success.

For years – London Fashion Week has showcased not just the big well-known names in British fashion, but also the – often brilliant – up and coming talent.

That is what has always made London stand out. That is what has always given this city's fashion business the leading edge.

And I am delighted that this year we have designers such as Malene Oddershede Bach and Victoria Beckham showing in London for the first time.

British fashion, as Stephanie just said, is serious business. Some of our biggest names are known the world over – Stella McCartney, Burberry, Mulberry. The industry as a whole contributes £32 billion to our economy, employs over 890,000 people, and totals billions of pounds worth of exports.

But if I am honest, we have all got a job to do, which is about getting that message out to people – about how valuable fashion is to the British economy as a whole, about how many jobs are involved in the British fashion industry and what it means to our economy.

We are home to some of the world's finest fashion colleges. Our designers sit at the helm of global brands. And we lead the world in design and digital innovation – with names such as MatchesFashion, Net-a-Porter, ASOS and Farfetch launched in the UK.

And of course – this year there was the live streaming of London Fashion Week shows to millions of fashion watchers in China.

But it is also London's reputation as a thriving, diverse city that makes this such a great place to do business. And I am delighted to hear that Chanel – one of the grand dames in the fashion business – has announced it is relocating its global headquarters here to London.

I want to see us continue this success – I want Britain to continue being a place where talent is nurtured and supported, and where fashion can thrive and do business.

And as we look to build a new future for a global Britain, as an open, outward-facing country outside of the EU – I want to ensure that our fashion industry – an industry in which we have so much pride – can build upon its success. That is why our exceptional talent visa will ensure that the world's leading fashion designers can live and work here. It is why we are backing the industries of the future through our modern Industrial Strategy – supporting innovation, technology and encouraging jobs and growth in every part of the country.

And it is why through the Creative Industries Sector Deal we – along with industry – are investing £150 million in creative businesses, including design and fashion.

But today – as London Fashion Week draws to a close – let me congratulate you all once again.

As I say, let's work together to make sure everybody realises what an important part London fashion does and British fashion plays in our economy and employing people up and down our country. Let's get the message out there of the fantastic talent we've got – not just the big names but all the people who are behind those big names and every aspect of the industry which leads to its enormous success.

And I wish you all every success for the season ahead. Thank you.

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## [Speech: Market Millennials: Speech by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury at the Cato Institute](#)

In the early 18th century, two Englishmen – Trenchard and Gordon – wrote a book called *Essays on Liberty, Civil and Religious*.

The other name for that book, as many of you will know, is *Cato's Letters* – from which this institute takes its name.

That book is one of the most important works on individual liberty.

It made the case that individual freedom is the surest way to happiness and prosperity.

But in Britain and America we need to learn this lesson again.

Because Anglo-American enterprise is under attack.

Not just by people in distant places who have always sought to do us harm.

But from closer to home.

And I believe it is imperative, not just to defend the values which have delivered social progress and prosperity, but to have the confidence to re-invent them for a new generation.

To create a modern Anglo-American dream.

## **Freedom**

So why am I obsessed with freedom?

It's what motivated me to go into politics.

I wasn't born into a Conservative family. In fact, I grew up in a British left-wing household, and as a young child my parents dragged me along to anti-nuclear marches, protesting against the British-American military alliance.

But by my late teens, I had rebelled against this orthodoxy.

I took the decision to think freely and to back freedom.

And I fell in love with economics, and became a Conservative.

My parents could protest – and I could rebel against them – because we had the luxury of growing up in a country that valued freedom.

It's not always easy, but being willing to challenge the status quo is what makes our nations successful – both for the individuals and for our society.

In Britain and America, you are able to speak your mind, you are able to set up a business, you are able to make your own way in life – it doesn't matter where you come from or what your background is.

Harnessing and celebrating that human ingenuity and individuality has been the key to our success.

It has made the Anglo-American economic system the most successful in human history. An engine of social and economic progress.

## **Anglo-American Enterprise**

It's unbelievable – but in the UK now the words 'business' or 'profit' are sometimes hurled as insults, as if they imply shady deals and fat cats.

But this is a subversion of what a free enterprise economy is...

Free enterprise is a hymn to individuality and non-conformity.

It's what allows the young to flower and the anti-establishment to flourish.

That's why our great countries are so good at producing revolutionaries – from Steve Jobs to Anita Roddick.

And there's a reason why technologies like the smartphone – which have given the young more power to shape the world – come from free countries.

We are the Wild West for ideas, where there is space for growth, and where pioneers push each other towards ever greater heights.

No one knows their place, no one fears failure, and no one is ashamed of success.

That is the way countries and economies drive themselves forward.

Some say it's chaotic and unplanned.

I say: you're absolutely right!

That's nature's formula for change and improvement.

### **The internet**

The internet is a great recent example.

It became the phenomenon it is because it is decentralized and democratized, allowed to evolve, adapt and improve...

There is a culture of permission-less innovation: people don't wait for a certificate to explore their idea – they just launch websites or invent apps.

Yes, US-funded research helped to develop the technology that has enabled the growth of the Internet as we know it. And governments all over the world continue to play a vital role in tackling online crime and exploitation.

But imagine if governments had interfered too much during the expansion of the internet.

Whole industries may not have been invented because a committee hadn't given approval.

Mail-order goods would take months to arrive, the taxi app would be more expensive than the original, and Donald Trump's tweets would be pending authorisation...

...heaven forbid.

[Political content removed]

### **Direction of society**

Some people say the wind is blowing against us.

That we've got a bunch of 20-something radicals who are plotting in Starbucks to overthrow capitalism.

But that's not what I see in the young people I meet.

I see people that want more freedom, not less.

They show it in the way they live their lives: using the latest apps to go where they like, eat what they like, and work whenever they like.

Opinion polls show a generation who are focused and aspirational. They are entrepreneurs who want to set up their own businesses.

They are the future of our countries, and we must not hold them back.

But since the financial crash ten years ago, we haven't been talking enough about giving these people what they want.

Anglo-American capitalism has been on the back foot and not enough people have been articulating the case for economic liberty.

Bankers took lots of the blame, and rightly so – but regulators and governments, who backed mortgages through Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, also had a hand in what happened.

Into this vacuum, we've seen extremists from every side telling us that everything's bad.

And who trade on trashing all that has made our countries great.

We need to take on these doom-mongers.

### **Young Americans**

Here's my clarion call to the forces of liberty. It's time to get our mojo back – and stop apologising for backing enterprise.

We need to talk about freedom, aspiration, success.

I know we can win this argument.

Because we have won this argument before.

[Political content removed]

### **The dynamic duo of capitalism**

But it's not enough to defend our values.

A question for our Government is how we push forward reform and harness freedom to create success for a new generation. How do we create a modern Anglo-American dream?

We remain two of the most prosperous and free countries to live in, and our economies have grown robustly since the 80s – with unemployment now down to around 4%.

Our Industrial Strategy will help strengthen Britain's skills, bolster our industries, and build the infrastructure we need to boost productivity and

earning power.

But I worry now that a thicket of regulation and control that has developed which is holding people back.

...which is about managing risk rather than taking opportunities.

As Nassim Taleb points out in his book Antifragile – these certainties are illusory.

By clinging on the past or seeking to straightjacket the future – we put ourselves at more risk. You create things that are too big to fail – from the mining industry to the superbanks.

And when it goes wrong it produces a political climate that many call populism.

But I don't denigrate people wanting to better themselves.

In my view it's right that people want the opportunity to:

- A good job.
- A great place to live.
- ... and to feel like you're succeeding and making a difference.

People are being told by some that free enterprise has failed them, and that the way to solve their problems is with more government control, spending and regulation.

But that couldn't be more wrong.

Our economies work best at full tilt, when individuals and businesses are liberated.

We need to rediscover that economic dynamism we have deep within us.

And we need to become the dynamic duo once more.

### **Re-invention**

Dynamism means embracing the new.

Today, too many authorities in the US and UK are embroiled in wars with the likes of Airbnb and Uber.

At the same time, media outlets all over the world are desperate to shackle YouTube, which has done most to democratise media and the dissemination of information.

We must remember that whilst these new entrants might discomfort the incumbents...

they have the potential to benefit everyone else.



And it's the might of popular demand that shapes economies.

We need to allow places and people the flexibility to reinvent themselves, from Cleveland Ohio to Cleveland Teesside.

When President Trump came to power, he vowed to "to cancel every needless job-killing regulation".

Whilst there is a place for well-designed, proportionate regulation that protects the public, there should be a high bar for new regulations that constrain business.

In the US at the end of 2017, regulation was not cited as the top cost pressure for the first time in six years.

Manufacturers, particularly, have seen more reasonable enforcement by the authorities.

And there are signs that this is having a positive impact on small firms.

It means that instead of worrying over new rules and employing people to do compliance, they can think about new investments and taking on new staff.

I'm visiting the Common Sense Initiative in Ohio. They've kickstarted business with a common-sense approach to regulation.

One great example is in energy, where many states have opened up more land for fracking.

American energy costs are now some of the lowest in the world, and this has spurred businesses on.

## **Infrastructure**

A lot of people in the US are talking to me about infrastructure.

In the UK, we are investing in infrastructure at the highest level in 40 years, as we recognise its importance.

But, projects take too long in the West, held back by clunky regulations.

In China, they talk about 'China speed', how new roads rise from the ground in the blink of an eye.

We need to streamline our processes to compete.

Republicans have made it a top goal to expedite infrastructure building, aiming to bring timelines down from 4.7 years to 2 years.

We want to follow the same path.

In Britain, we're good at construction.

But we still face barriers on projects that are vital to the strength of our

economy.

It's taken years to finally agree to a third runway at Heathrow – which will turbocharge growth across the UK and ensure we remain one of the most open and free-trading countries in the world.

## **Housing**

We need to take the same approach to housing.

Today, cities in the UK like London, Edinburgh, Cambridge and York are bursting with potential.

But our most productive cities are being held back by a byzantine planning system, parts of which date back to just after the Second World War. That's why we're working to reform it.

It's meant that the share of working age people moving town for a new job has gone down by 25% since 2001, with the most significant decline among young graduates – which is terrible for our economy.

Worse, housing is taking up an ever-increasing share of our monthly incomes, leaving people feeling poorer.

This is bad news for everyone: if you can't move to live near the best jobs, you can't get them.

And it means many people are left in the same time, competing for jobs.

America has a similar problem. Since the 1980s, the proportion of Americans who move between states has halved.

It's those cities that are welcoming to new people and willing to expand that will benefit.

Once a mecca for the automobile industry, Cleveland is attracting tech investment and new people, with costs of living up to 60% lower than that of Boston, Silicon Valley, and New York.

## **Fiscal discipline**

Individuals do best, creating wealth and jobs for everyone, when they are free.

But keeping a handle on regulation is only one side of the coin; keeping taxes low is the other.

It's important that government is there to provide vital services like schools for our children, and invest in infrastructure, but we know that every pound or dollar that's taken in taxes is a pound or dollar that can't be invested by a business.

Or spent by a family on a new car or a holiday.

That's why I'm proud governments on both sides of the Atlantic have cut taxes.

We have reduced corporation tax from 28% to 19% today, while in the US, you've cut corporation tax from 35% to 21%.

Allowing businesses to invest more money to grow has meant more jobs, higher wages and better prospects for families.

That's a record I'm proud of, and one we should not be afraid to defend.

### **Conclusion**

Our societies are less deferential than they have ever been, with a new generation more determined to get their own way.

We need to fight to prove that our model is the one that gives them the best chance to shape the world. After Brexit, we have a huge opportunity...

To turbocharge freedom...

Unshackle entrepreneurs...

Build a more dynamic economy...

And shape a new relationship with America.

To succeed, we must trust in ourselves and our principles.

We must make the modern Anglo-American dream happen for a new generation.

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## **Speech: Jeremy Wright speaking at the RTS Conference**

Good afternoon everybody and thank you to the Royal Television Society for inviting me here today.

I feel very fortunate to have been in this wonderful role for three months.

One of the many brilliant things about heading up DCMS is it provides an opportunity to play a part in the blistering advances in technology that are transforming all of our lives.

As leaders in the media and creative industries you know about these advances better than most.

In this rapidly changing and increasingly polarised world, the role of the

media is evolving, and in my view becoming more important than ever.

For the media, and for the television industry in particular, trust is a vital commodity.

It may not capture the imagination in quite the same way as a new drama; be as immediately celebrated as an overnight BARB rating; or even be treasured quite as much as new revenue..

But all broadcasters need trust to succeed.

In an era of rapid technological change, infinite consumer choice, and spectacularly-resourced international competition – trust is something that is vital to the success of British media.

So I want to talk today about what the TV industry – and public service broadcasters in particular – can do to maintain that trust, and help us address some of the most pressing issues in our society and democracy.

## **Disinformation**

The most obvious aspect of trust is in relation to the accuracy of news.

Disinformation, and misinformation, is one of the most significant issues of our age.

We have all seen how it can sow discord and pose a risk to free and fair elections.

And in my previous role of Attorney General, I saw firsthand how it can jeopardise our criminal process.

As the digital revolution continues to transform our lives, the potential to disrupt our civil society and democratic institutions becomes greater than ever.

An emerging example is how artificial intelligence can be used to manipulate audio and video content quickly and in ways that make it very hard for consumers to detect.

Now while this has many potentially exciting benefits for the creative industries – such as re-dubbing films and television in different languages – it can also be employed in the creation of what are called ‘deepfakes’.

That is to say very realistic, but nonetheless fake, audio and video content – for example the widely cited video of President Obama that I know you saw earlier.

Given the speed of technological change, it is perhaps no wonder that according to Reuters, only 42 per cent of people trust the news they read.

Crucially, however, 70 per cent of viewers consider television a trustworthy source of news.

This is something for the industry to be proud of. But while TV is still where most adults in the UK turn for their news, this is not true for younger audiences. Indeed Ofcom found that for 82 per cent of 16 to 24 year olds, the Internet is their first port of call.

And yet while people are increasingly turning to the online space for news, less than a third of people believe that most news apps and websites are trustworthy.

As we all know, the Internet, once described by a former executive of Google as “the largest experiment in anarchy” – is not a place where fact and fiction can be easily distinguished.

In our Digital Charter we set out a clear goal to tackle disinformation and misinformation here in the UK. One of the ways we will do this is by giving people the digital literacy and critical thinking skills needed to properly assess online content.

This will add to the important work that has been done by The Times, the Guardian Foundation, the BBC and others in launching projects to improve media literacy.

We are also developing a range of regulatory and non-regulatory measures to improve transparency and accountability online, and thus tackle a range of online harms.

I would like to take this opportunity to spend a moment on one of the most egregious examples of inaccurate information online.

Following the Salisbury incident, Russia has begun a blatant disinformation campaign: with misleading procedural questions and over 40 different official narratives, all false. Many of these were carried and promoted on Kremlin-backed media.

Russia Today, funded by the Russian state, is a major concern.

Ofcom has repeatedly found that RT has been in violation of standards; these include cases when Ofcom say RT’s coverage has been labeled “materially misleading”.

Ofcom currently has 10 investigations into the impartiality of RT’s news and current affairs programmes. I welcome these investigations and I await their conclusions with great interest.

It is true, the tech sector has been taking action, especially Twitter, to make mounting disinformation campaigns more difficult and costly.

This has included the development of algorithms to spot fake accounts and the deletion of hundreds of thousands of suspect accounts, many linked to hostile states such as Russia.

But of course, they can and should do more in this battle. Our democracy depends on it.

And as well as tackling sources of inaccurate information, we want to strengthen and support high quality sources that people can trust. High quality and properly researched journalism is the best possible weapon in our battle against fake news.

And so the sustainability of our high quality media is something that should concern us all.

In March we launched an independent review, chaired by Dame Frances Cairncross, to look at how the production and distribution of high-quality news journalism can be sustained in a changing market, with a particular focus on the online space.

The call for evidence closed just two days ago, and I look forward to Dame Frances' report and recommendations early next year.

Similarly, the PSBs and other trusted broadcasters have a vital role to play.

As well as continuing to provide high quality news on linear TV, PSBs must also work to reach a wider audience.

And we have seen a lot of success here – for example Channel 4 News: on Facebook they get sixty million views per month – the largest of any British news programme. And last year they had two billion video views across Facebook and YouTube.

It is not for me to tell PSBs, or other major broadcasters, how to operate but I welcome these developments and I am sure we will see more of them in the coming years.

## **Representation**

Of course, the accuracy of news is not the only way for PSBs to generate trust.

Our public service broadcasters are national institutions. For decades, they have entertained, informed and educated; establishing a trust which was inherited from generation to generation.

For a long time this was never in doubt – until 1997 most people only had access to four television channels.

But, of course, the market is now changing rapidly.

Competition for eyeballs, subscriptions, and most importantly time has never been more intense.

Data has become key in the battle to produce the next hit – global media giants with vast audience analysis budgets are operating at a significant advantage.

We often hear how our PSBs struggle to compete against these leviathans – and that may be true in part when it comes to some budgets.

But for the same money that Netflix spent on the first two series of the Crown, the BBC made eighteen series, which were seen by 74% of the population.

Our PSBs have so many unique advantages that they need to exploit to the full.

But as national institutions in a multichannel world, they must also work to secure the trust of the whole UK.

One example is making younger viewers just as engaged in PSB programming as their parents were.

Younger viewers are more open to new technology and more receptive to new brands than any generation before them.

This change in consumption habits is showing no sign of slowing down. So you must reach them where they want to be reached. And they must find you where they expect you to be found.

I want to see the PSBs being nimble, working across platforms, innovating and collaborating. Internationally this has been a success: Britbox is showing the best of British to viewers in the US and Canada. PSBs should not be afraid of building on this success at home.

To support this, we are launching a Contestable Fund pilot, of up to 60 million pounds, to stimulate the provision and plurality of original UK content for young audiences, both on linear TV and on demand.

This will help create new funding avenues for creators of original content and bring new voices to the market.

We will be publishing a policy paper shortly on the final design, and I strongly encourage the commercial PSBs and other free-to-air broadcasters to demonstrate their commitment to young audiences by supporting the fund once it is launched April next year.

PSBs are national institutions and at their best, they have an innate ability to tap into the mood of the nation. This is their competitive edge.

And so it is crucial that these organisations are made up of the people that they serve – both on and off screen.

We all know that people want content that speaks to them and their experiences – this means people from different regions, ethnic backgrounds and social groups. Proper representation is vital to maintaining the trust of different audiences.

83 per cent of viewers think it is important that PSBs portray their region fairly, however only 63 per cent think that they do.

I am very pleased that the BBC and Channel 4 have agreed to increase their regional impact, and I hope other broadcasters will continue to do more.

More than half of black viewers felt that there weren't enough black people on TV, and when they are, 51 per cent feel that they are portrayed negatively.

This means asking some searching questions too about the makeup of our media organisations. Because to know how to evolve to meet the needs of younger, more diverse audiences as they get older; it is easier if you employ them.

This means providing genuine opportunities for those who have talent but may not yet be the finished product, or might not know the right people.

Michaela Coel talked compellingly in Edinburgh just a few weeks ago about how in her early years in the TV industry she felt like a misfit or an outsider.

As national institutions it is your job to invite people in. By doing so, you will not only create and solidify that trust: you will secure it for generations to come.

So today I am asking you to go further in your efforts.

By doing more to build trust in the accuracy of news through high quality journalism and reporting;

By doing more to provide for diverse, young and UK-wide audiences, and exploring innovative ways to reach them;

And by providing opportunities for under-represented groups both on and off screen.

In exchange, the government will support PSBs to ensure they continue to thrive, and stay prominent, as part of a healthy, sustainable and dynamic media landscape.

So I can assure you I will be looking closely at the results of Ofcom's work on Prominence, and will work with the PSBs and the whole sector, to ensure the government is playing our part in supporting the future of public service broadcasting at the very heart of our vibrant media sector.

## **Conclusion**

Broadcasting is one of this country's greatest success stories. Our extraordinary content and talent are respected around the world.

Indeed, the UK recently reclaimed top position in the Global Soft Power Index, driven in large part by our culture and creative industries, not least our superb broadcasting sector.

Shows and formats such as Doctor Who and Bake Off are known and admired the world over, and one study found that among US readers four of the 10 most trusted sources of news are based in Britain.

We need to build on this.



Because a strong media means a strong democracy and a strong nation.

And we cannot be complacent.

Those sowing discord want to undermine this trust and the institutions upon which our liberal democracy relies.

Trust is a precious commodity and bolstering it is vital to our future.

Thank you for the part that you play in this and that you will continue to play; I will be on your side as you do so.

Thank you very much.

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## **Press release: James Brokenshire removes commissioners from Rotherham council after 3-year intervention**

Communities Secretary, the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, has today (18 September 2018) confirmed that he is concluding the government's intervention in Rotherham metropolitan borough council and [returning all powers to the authority](#).

The [intervention](#), which was jointly undertaken by the Ministry and the Department for Education, began in February 2015 following critical reports by Baroness Alexis Jay and Dame Louise Casey which uncovered significant failings at the council that contributed to child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

Mr Brokenshire confirmed that following strong progress by the council he will return control of all services to them on Monday 24 September, including children's social care, and withdraw all 3 commissioners.

He added that this was on condition that the council commissions an independent progress review of delivery of services to be completed by 18 February 2019, before the directions expire on 31 March 2019.

The action follows the gradual return of selected functions to the council on 4 separate occasions since the intervention began in February 2015.

Communities Secretary, The Rt Honorable James Brokenshire MP said:

Vulnerable young people who should have been protected were repeatedly failed by Rotherham council, which is why the government stepped in to ensure these errors can never occur again.

I am pleased that strong progress has now been made at the council with the support of the commissioners.

The return of all powers to Rotherham council is not a decision that I take lightly, but I am satisfied that the council has learnt the lessons of the past and is now able to provide the services its residents deserve and expect.

Minister for Children and Families, Nadhim Zahawi MP said:

Every child, wherever they live, needs to have access to the right care and support so they can flourish in life. For too long the people of Rotherham were let down by the authorities in charge of protecting them.

The handing back of local children's services to the council marks an important step for this town. I am pleased that vulnerable children in Rotherham are now getting the help they need when they need it, and I hope to see continuing improvements through the independent review next year.

The then-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the then-Secretary of State for Education exercised their intervention powers on 26 February 2015 as Rotherham metropolitan borough council was failing to comply with its best value duty. These Directions expire on 31 March 2019.

Three commissioners have been working with Rotherham council. They are:

- Mary Ney (Lead Commissioner)
- Patricia Bradwell (Children's Social Care Commissioner)
- Julie Kenny CBE, DL (Supporting Commissioner)

There were originally 5 commissioners sent to Rotherham council, led by Sir Derek Meyers, who was also supported by Stella Manzie CBE and Malcolm Newsam with Mary Ney and Julie Kenney CBE acting as supporting Commissioners. Patricia Bradwell replaced Malcolm Newsam in May 2016 and Stella Manzie CBE left the council in February 2016. Mary Ney was appointed Lead Commissioner in place of Sir Derek Myers in March 2017.

Selected functions were returned to the council on 11 February 2016, 12 December 2016, 21 March 2017 and 12 September 2017.

The Secretary of State considered representations on his 'minded to' decision, which was announced on 23 July, until 16 August before a final decision.

As part of the decision-making process on the announcement, Mr Brokenshire and Mr Zahawi met with Rotherham's MPs on Monday, July 16 who indicated their support to conclude the intervention.