

Speech: Committing to Peace and Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Thank you very much indeed Mr President and thank you to the High Representative for your briefing today and for the work of your office to maintain peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has long been a very important issue for this Council. Almost a totemic issue, if one goes back to the start of the conflict in the early 1990s. For the United Kingdom's part, we remain committed to the continuing role the High Representative and your office. The OHR as it's known remains the final authority regarding the civilian implementation of the peace agreement, and this includes our support for the use of the Bonn Powers if the situation requires.

We welcome the unanimous adoption of the resolution today, which authorizes EUFOR Althea or a further 12 months. This resolution demonstrates the United Kingdom and the international community's commitment to security in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The OHR, Mr President, and also EUFOR Althea, are crucial vehicles to allow the international community to support the maintenance of Bosnia and Herzegovina's security, stability and territorial integrity, which are vital to the country's future as a modern, democratic European state.

As I said Mr President, there was once a time when this Council dealt with Bosnia every day of its existence. I have had the privilege of working on and off on the Balkans file for over 20 years. I feel some depression at what the High Representative tells us about how some issues are still not resolved and how they repeat themselves. But I also want to point out that the hard-won peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina is fragile and it shouldn't be taken for granted. While the current situation remains calm, threats to security remain alongside new challenges, such as an increase in migration, as the High Representative mentioned.

It's a very important issue for the EU and for Europe. It's our regional crisis, if you like; it's something in which the EU has invested a huge amount of time and effort, money and coaching and patience, and we will hear later from the EU ambassador who will be able to set this out more clearly. But I just wanted, Mr President if I may, to address briefly what the Russian ambassador said, speaking before the vote. Russia is a member of the contact group and a member of the steering group for Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would much rather see Russia trying to do everything it can to consolidate Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state to help modernize and to help it make progress towards those Euro-Atlantic institutions that have been, since Dayton, the foundation of its existence as a modern state in its region, Europe. And I think that would be the best service that we could all do Bosnia.

I'd like to turn to the elections. The UK welcomes the calm and orderly

conduct during these elections which were genuinely competitive, but we continue to be concerned by the level of ethnic division in politics and by report irregularities and the inability to resolve key issues of election reform prior to the elections was disappointing and it's an ongoing concern. And the divisive and nationalist political rhetoric that was especially loud out in the run-up to the elections is dangerous and it creates an environment where real long-term security and stability will be difficult to achieve. It's also backwards-looking, Mr President; what Bosnia needs most of all is to move forwards. Other countries in the Balkans regions are moving forward. They're making progress on their EU accession arrangements. Where they wish to, they are making progress on getting closer to NATO. This is benefiting regional security and stability and once again Bosnia and Herzegovina risk being left behind from this regional modernization and progress. In particular, those in positions of responsibility should act in the interests of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina rather than spread divisive sentiment. I want to echo what the High Representative said about waiting until these leaders have taken office before we properly hold them to account, but I also want to set out that we will hold them to account. Political leaders need to show leadership. They need to sow tolerance. They need to help modernize their country. As a crucial time post-elections, political leaders must work together in a cooperative manner to form governments quickly so progress can be made on key reforms and on Euro-Atlantic integration and the 5+2 agenda. These reforms are important because they will bring improvements to the day-to-day lives of Bosnian citizens – all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens. They are also important, Mr President, because they help embed national and regional security and stability, an issue that as I said at the beginning has long occupied this Council.

Those in positions of responsibility should act in the interests of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it is especially concerning this rhetoric and a reluctance to compromise is indicative of the wider political environment. We will be watching these developments closely.

It's also important that political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina urgently address all judgements around elections to ensure all citizens have the ability to participate fully in the democratic process as they all deserve. And it's regrettable that many of these issues have remained unresolved over several election cycles – a significant amount of time. Any resolution to these issues needs to meet international standards and uphold the principle of equality for all citizens, and this includes the ability to elect officials and to be elected.

Conversely Mr President, we welcome the progress made by Bosnia and Herzegovina on certain aspects of reform. For example the adoption of agricultural and energy strategies and the eventual adoption of the criminal procedure code. Although the delay in doing so was regrettable, we also welcome the continued cooperation on women, peace and security, and encourage this to continue.

Finally Mr President I want to echo what the High Representative said about reconciliation. Srebrenica remains the worst massacre in Europe since the

Second World War. Nine thousand Muslim men and boys were taken from their homes and they were murdered. It is absolutely vital Mr President that reconciliation efforts are made in genuine earnest and that they are accelerated.

Thank you very much.

[News story: Pride of Britain winners honoured by Prime Minister at Downing Street](#)

The Prime Minister welcomed this year's Pride of Britain winners and their families to a Downing Street reception last week to celebrate their incredible stories of bravery and determination.

Now in its twentieth year, the Pride of Britain Awards recognise the achievements of individuals from across the UK who have demonstrated kindness, courage and perseverance.

This year's inspirational winners include the British divers who were instrumental in saving the lives of a group of young boys in Thailand after they were trapped in flooded caves, Emma Picton-Jones, recognised for her work to support those with mental health difficulties in rural communities and Eddie O'Gorman whose foundation Children with Cancer UK has raised more than £230 million to fight the disease.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

From incredible acts of bravery to decades of community service, this year's winners have all made a life-changing impact in their local communities and beyond through their compassion and determination.

It's humbling to hear the stories of all the awards winners, all of them doing extraordinary things and showing such generosity of spirit. I feel privileged to be able to offer them my congratulations.

Thank you for your inspirational courage and selflessness – you set an example to us all.

The Prime Minister also presented ten year old Max Johnson with the Child of Courage award. After being diagnosed with dilated cardiomyopathy – a disease which affects the heart muscle – Max campaigned to bring in an opt-out organ

donation system in England.

In recognition of his story, the legislation to change organ donation rules will become known as 'Max's Law', a tribute to his pivotal efforts. Max's visit comes the week after this law made a crucial step forward as it passed through the House of Commons.

Prime Minister Theresa May added:

It is truly astounding to see a young boy like Max, who when faced his own health struggles and spending 10 months in hospital waiting for a new heart, only became more determined to help others. I would like to thank him for all of his hard work in raising awareness for this issue and as we make these important changes to our organ donation system, potentially saving up to 700 lives a year, it only seems right to name the new legislation after him.

The Pride of Britain Awards are hosted by the Daily Mirror and ITV each year, where winners are drawn from over tens of thousands of public nominations.

[News story: Defence Minister hails UK-US transatlantic partnership](#)

As part of the visit, the Minister met with the US Navy Under Secretary Thomas Modly and US Army Under Secretary Ryan McCarthy to discuss bilateral capability priorities and future areas of collaboration between the two armed forces.

This came as the Minister addressed the Heritage Foundation think-tank, where he highlighted the threats that both nations face and emphasised the vital role of Nato and the need for long-term planning and the depth of UK-US collaboration.

Addressing the Heritage Foundation, Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

Over the years, the deep UK-US alliance has endured through two World conflicts, the chill of the Cold War, and the continuing struggle against extremist terror. Today our forces work highly effectively together across the globe – on land and sea, in the air, space and cyberspace. We are stronger together.

Just as our Armed Forces' capabilities are effectively intertwined, so too are our industries. We are now moving even nearer the goal of full interoperability, leveraging the talent, strength

and innovation of both our Defence industries to meet the challenges of the future.

In a move to reinforce stronger industrial partnerships, the Minister also met with the headliners in the American defence industry, meeting with likes of Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, Boeing and General Dynamics.

The UK and US are the biggest overseas suppliers to each other's militaries and have worked closely on numerous key projects.

The most prominent of these is the F-35 fighter jet programme, with the aircraft now embarked for flight trials on HMS Queen Elizabeth as she sailed into New York just last month. Other recent examples of collaboration are the Unmanned Air Systems programme and a Common Missile Compartment for UK-US Ballistic Missile Submarines.

Both nations also play leading roles in Nato, which is vital to the transatlantic partnership and have been calling for other nations to invest more in security and to increase the readiness of their forces. By the end of 2018, eight members will be meeting the commitment of spending 2% of their GDP on defence compared with just three in 2014.

In further display of solidarity, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson recently announced that the Red Arrows are set to carry out their largest ever tour of North America in 2019 as the UK looks to strengthen ties and sign trade deals outside of Europe.

News story: HMCTS public event – 6 November 2018

We hosted our second public event today (6 November 2018), inviting those who represent public court users to see first-hand the progress public user organisations have helped us to make over the last year.

The event itinerary was influenced by what attendees told us last year, offering longer activity sessions for guests to immerse themselves in our latest project developments. With both market stalls and hands on activity sessions available, over 160 participants were given the opportunity to engage with 27 project teams, attending across all jurisdictions.

Justice Minister Lucy Frazer said:

I was delighted to welcome so many stakeholders today and thank them for their invaluable contribution to our reform programme so far.

Their expertise and insight is vital as we continue to build a modern, world class justice system fit for the 21st century, and this was an opportunity for them to see the difference their time and commitment has made – even interacting with some of the products they have helped design.



Some of the attendee quotes included:

It's amazing how HMCTS projects have progressed compared to last year.

There was lots of good discussion around vulnerable defendants. I've gained a wider understanding of their access to services and how they access online plea.

Everyone that came to the Crime room really embraced the challenge questions that the projects were posing. There were some really great suggestions which the projects will take back and feed into their services.

So many active discussions going on – people were so engrossed that

they were forgetting to move round to see other projects!

[News story: HMCTS public event – 6 November 2018](#)

We hosted our second public event today (6 November 2018), inviting those who represent public court users to see first-hand the progress public user organisations have helped us to make over the last year.

The event itinerary was influenced by what attendees told us last year, offering longer activity sessions for guests to immerse themselves in our latest project developments. With both market stalls and hands on activity sessions available, over 160 participants were given the opportunity to engage with 27 project teams, attending across all jurisdictions.

Justice Minister Lucy Frazer said:

I was delighted to welcome so many stakeholders today and thank them for their invaluable contribution to our reform programme so far.

Their expertise and insight is vital as we continue to build a modern, world class justice system fit for the 21st century, and this was an opportunity for them to see the difference their time and commitment has made – even interacting with some of the products they have helped design.

Some of the attendee quotes included:

It's amazing how HMCTS projects have progressed compared to last year.

There was lots of good discussion around vulnerable defendants. I've gained a wider understanding of their access to services and how they access online plea.

Everyone that came to the Crime room really embraced the challenge questions that the projects were posing. There were some really great suggestions which the projects will take back and feed into

their services.

So many active discussions going on – people were so engrossed that they were forgetting to move round to see other projects!