

Speech: Speech at the Queen's Birthday Party 2018 in Guatemala

(Check against delivery)

Welcome and thanks for joining us today at our very special party. This is the third time I have had the honour to be one of the hosts of the Queen's Birthday Party here in Guatemala – but the first time I have had a speaking part! For those who do not know –or didn't read their invitation very carefully – and are wondering why Tom is being uncharacteristically silent, Tom and I swapped roles in November last year when I was appointed ambassador to Guatemala and he to Honduras. It is a great privilege for me to be British ambassador in a country I had already got to know and love during our first two years here. I feel very honoured.

Apart from the name and gender of the British Ambassador, nothing else has changed. My objectives, values and ambitions for UK-Guatemala relations are exactly the same as Tom's and reflect very clearly the policies of the British Government.

We still have the European Union flag here by the stage because we are still active and committed members of the European Union. And I want to thank all our partners and allies in Europe and in other countries for their strong support one week after the Salisbury attack.

This year our Queen's Birthday Party falls in the middle of our Fifteen Days of the UK, a festival of British activity across a whole range of areas, demonstrating very clearly the wide range of UK-Guatemalan engagement: on Monday the British ship RFA Mounts Bay visited Puerto Barrios and shared experience with Guatemalan counterparts of its role providing humanitarian assistance in the Caribbean after the dreadful destruction of last year's hurricanes; earlier this week we had various workshops with two experts from HM Treasury to talk about British experience and expertise in infrastructure development and public private partnerships; next week three judges from the UK will be here to discuss the importance of judicial independence and provide training to judges on how to manage complex cases. As part of an ongoing project we have with the British Museum and Google Arts and Culture, that connects Mayan ruins discovered in the 19th Century with the latest technology, we have a special kit in Guatemala to virtually demonstrate these wonders and I invite you to pass by our stand and check them out. On Saturday we will be formally marking the end of a project we have supported for the last two years working with girls' clubs in Guatemala City and Mixco to encourage girls to stay in education and be ambitious for themselves and their future.

Girls' education – and the need for every girl, as well as boy, to have 12 years of quality education – is a key priority of the British Government. We recognise that if you change the lives of girls, you transform societies. A British NGO working here, supporting education, Phoenix Projects, has seen a

real reduction in the numbers enrolling for its primary school because more girls are now staying on at secondary school and then going on to get jobs after that, destroying the vicious circle of young pregnancies. Girls' education and greater political participation are key not only to development, but also to peace and security.

As for political participation, you may have noticed that some of the ladies here are dressed as if they were going to an event 100 years ago, and there is a very good reason for that. This year the UK is celebrating the centenary of (some) women obtaining the right to vote and acknowledging the important role played by the suffragette campaigners in changing the law. I have to admit to a particular affinity to the suffragettes: they were headed by a formidable lady from Manchester, Emmeline Pankhurst, and her daughters went to the same school as I did (although not, despite what my children think, at the same time!). The Pankhursts were great believers in the power of education.

Some of the statements made against them at the time of their campaign appear to us now quite absurd, for example: If women become involved in politics, they will stop marrying, stop having children, and the human race will die out. As the ambassador of a country with a female head of state and a female prime minister, I am delighted that such views no longer prevail, that times have changed.

Often people talk about the importance of traditional values, without being very clear what is meant. Some traditional values – a woman's place is in the home – are not ones I or my country espouse. So let's be clear about the values we do espouse, the UK promotes the universal human values of integrity, respect for human rights, good government, gender equality and rule of law. And we are proud to work with Guatemala in these areas.

We are also proud to have worked with Guatemala in its fight against corruption, a fight which has assured Guatemala a global reputation for better governance and for tackling problems which blight many countries. Our support for the Public Prosecutor's Office and CICIG is assured and we trust that the election of the next Public Prosecutor, as well as the other important positions such as Head of the Tax Office, and Comptroller General, will enable Guatemala to continue on the same path of fighting and preventing corruption. Corruption and a weak rule of law frighten away investors and as British ambassador I am keen to see many more British companies in Guatemala. This is why I am very pleased that our British Chamber of Commerce is already registered and will start operations in two months and will be a great vehicle to support more British Companies investing in Guatemala.

We already have several British companies and brands here in Guatemala and I wish to thank them and others for their generous sponsorship of our event today, especially, Jaguar Energy, Transequipos, Cementos Progresos, CSC Group, Yantarni, Cerveceria Centroamericana and Twinings. I also want to thank the British Embassy staff who have worked hard to make this party a great success.

I am also delighted to see many members of our Chevening Alumni Association

here today – Guatemalans who have received full scholarships from the British Government to study a Masters degree at some of the best universities in the world. Britain has worked hard to achieve its reputation for excellence in academia and research, but we have also been fortunate to have many distinguished British scientists. Yesterday we said goodbye to one of the greatest modern scientists Sir Stephen Hawking, a physicist who was not constrained by his physical condition, who looked to the stars and inspired us all to do the same. If ever there were a man who showed what a human being is capable of, it was Stephen Hawking. He will be much missed.

I have spoken a lot already about women's suffrage, but we are actually here today to mark the birthday of the one woman in the UK who does not have the vote – Her Majesty the Queen. This year the Queen will be 92 years old and last month marked the 66th anniversary of her accession to the throne. Despite her advancing years she will be hosting next month in London a summit of 52 heads of Government from the Commonwealth. She remains very active and much admired around the world. Her birthday is very definitely a cause for celebration, and I would like to ask you all to join me in a toast to Her Majesty the Queen.

[News story: MOT rule changes: 20 May 2018](#)

The way that the MOT test works in England, Scotland and Wales will change from Sunday 20 May 2018.

The changes will affect cars, vans, motorcycles and other light passenger vehicles.

There are 5 main changes you need to know.

1. Defects will be categorised differently

Defects found during the MOT will be categorised as either:

The category the MOT tester gives each item will depend on the type of problem and how serious it is.

MOT testers will still give advice about items you need to monitor. These are known as 'advisories'.

What the new categories mean

Item result	What it means about the item	How it affects your MOT result
Dangerous	A direct and immediate risk to road safety or has a serious impact on the environment. Do not drive the vehicle until it's been repaired.	Fail
Major	It may affect the vehicle's safety, put other road users at risk or have an impact on the environment. Repair it immediately.	Fail
Minor	No significant effect on the safety of the vehicle or impact on the environment. Repair as soon as possible.	Pass
Advisory	It could become more serious in the future. Monitor and repair it if necessary.	Pass
Pass	It meets the minimum legal standard. Make sure it continues to meet the standard.	Pass

2. Stricter rules for diesel car emissions

There will be stricter limits for emissions from diesel cars with a diesel particulate filter (DPF).

A DPF captures and stores exhaust soot to reduce emissions from diesel cars.

Check your car's handbook if you don't know if your car has a DPF.

Your vehicle will get a major fault if the MOT tester:

- can see smoke of any colour coming from the exhaust
- finds evidence that the DPF has been tampered with

3. Some new things will be included in the MOT

Daytime running lights will be checked on vehicles first used from 1 March 2018.

Some new items will be tested during the MOT.

They include checking:

- if tyres are obviously underinflated
- if the brake fluid has been contaminated
- for fluid leaks posing an environmental risk
- brake pad warning lights and if brake pads or discs are missing
- reversing lights on vehicles first used from 1 September 2009
- headlight washers on vehicles first used from 1 September 2009 (if they have them)
- daytime running lights on vehicles first used from 1 March 2018 (most of these vehicles will have their first MOT in 2021 when they're 3 years old)

There will be other smaller changes to how some items are checked. Your MOT centre will be able to tell you about these.

4. The MOT certificate will change

The current MOT test certificate (left) will change to a new style (right) to list the new types of defects.

The design of the [MOT certificate](#) will change.

It will list any defects under the new categories, so they're clear and easy to understand.

The service to [check the MOT history of a vehicle](#) will be updated to reflect the changes.

5. Some vehicles over 40 years old won't need an MOT

Cars, vans, motorcycles and other light passenger vehicles won't need to have an MOT if they're over 40 years old and have not been [substantially changed \(PDF, 62.8KB\)](#).

At the moment, only vehicles first built before 1960 are exempt from needing an MOT.

When the rules change on 20 May 2018, vehicles won't need an MOT from the 40th anniversary of when they were registered. You can [check the date the vehicle was registered](#) online.

Example

If a car was first registered on 31 May 1978, it won't need an MOT from 31 May 2018.

You won't have to apply to stop getting an MOT for your vehicle.

However, each time you [tax your historic vehicle](#) (even if you don't pay a fee), you'll have to declare it meets the rules for not needing an MOT.

More information

The [maximum fees](#) MOT centres can charge won't change.

In January 2018, the government decided to [keep the age a vehicle needs its first MOT at 3 years](#), rather than extend it to 4 years.

You can [get a free MOT reminder](#) by text message or email a month before your MOT is due.

You can be fined up to £1,000 for driving a vehicle without a valid MOT.

Speech: Call for Humanitarian Aid and Government Accountability in DRC

Thank you Mr President.

And thank you to our briefers for their clear and detailed accounts of why there has been such a rapid increase in humanitarian need in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

As Undersecretary General Lowcock reported, the number of people needing aid in the DRC has doubled in the past year. Today 13.1 million people need humanitarian assistance, the same number as in Syria. The United Nations has declared the worst level of humanitarian crisis – “Level 3” – in certain provinces, putting DRC alongside only Yemen, Syria and Iraq. Yet it is often absent from our screens and daily briefings. We must not let it fall down our agenda.

Mr President,

We are particularly concerned about the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable, especially women and girls, the disabled and children. The United Nation’s Joint Human Rights Office reported that there has been a 53% increase in victims of sexual violence in 2017.

Now, the Representative of EFIM gave us a powerful testimony and I’m grateful to her.

Hope, is a woman from Masisi in the east of the country, where 90% of the women have been raped. Four men in military uniforms raped her as she collected firewood for her family. The attack left her pregnant and HIV positive. She has since fled to a temporary camp in Goma and can no longer feed her eight children. They rely on humanitarian aid, like 8 million other Congolese children. 2 million children currently face starvation. Hope is one of 4.5 million internally displaced people in the DRC – the highest number in Africa. Over 2 million people have been displaced in the past year alone, so just in the last year, an equivalent number to the total number of IDPs in South Sudan has been displaced in DRC. There are a further 740,000 refugees from the DRC in neighbouring countries as a result of ongoing hostilities.

Mr President,

International support is vital to address the crisis and the United Kingdom will continue to play a key role. We have committed to spending \$285 million on humanitarian aid between 2017 and 2022. This support will provide over 3

million people with lifesaving support, including food, clean drinking water and essential health care.

To improve the challenging and limited access for humanitarian actors, DRC Government support is crucial. While we welcome the commitments made to facilitate the work of humanitarian organisations and reduce tariffs for humanitarian imports including medicines and food, this Council, and the people of the DRC, need to see concrete and sustained action.

In particular, we urge the Government to take the following three steps:

First, improve the administrative and financial registration procedures required for international NGOs to operate lawfully in-country, through consultations with NGOs themselves.

Second, reduce the bureaucracy for humanitarian workers to get visas and for essential relief items to get through customs.

And finally, ensure security across the country is maintained so that humanitarian organisations have sufficient access to those most in need.

The upcoming donor conference on 13th April is an opportunity for the Government of the Congo to demonstrate the progress they have made against their commitments to facilitate the improvement of the humanitarian situation.

It is also an opportunity for the international community to pledge our support to the people of the DRC and to show them that the World remembers Africa's "forgotten" crisis.

Mr President,

Let me be clear, humanitarian aid will only ever provide temporary relief in this crisis. The key root cause is political instability, which drives the deteriorating security and humanitarian situations. Too often, peaceful protesters are met with violence for speaking out about their political rights, in violation of their human rights. A number of people have been killed in church-led protests this year which we all must condemn.

Free, fair and transparent elections must be held on 23 December. With an estimated 46 million voters, spread over the world's eleventh largest country, this is no easy task. For the elections to be successful, the right conditions need to be created now.

The international community must remain focussed and united in our support for the people of DRC, and we must remain united in our expectations of its government, and our insistence on accountability and progress. We in the Security Council need to work with the region and sub-region to do so.

Mr President,

Finally, it is with great sadness that we remember the horrific, tragic murders of the UN experts Zaida Catalan and Michael Sharp, killed just over

one year ago in the Kasai region of DRC. This Council must continue to push for accountability for their deaths and we call on the Democratic Republic of Congo to ensure that their investigation is thorough and transparent and to ensure that all those responsible are held to account. We should have a full update on the progress of that investigation soon.

Thank you Mr President.

News story: Heritage Lottery Fund/National Heritage Memorial Fund Reappointment

“Sir Peter Luff has been Chair of the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund since March 2015. He had previously been MP for Mid Worcestershire and for Worcester, since 1992, standing down at the 2015 General Election. He was Commons Co-Chair of the Speaker’s Advisory Committee on the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta and the 750th anniversary of the de Montfort Parliament.

He was Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology from 2010-2012, and Chair of two House of Commons Select Committees – (Agriculture 1997-2000, and Business Innovation and Skills 2005-2010). He was knighted in 2014 for political and public service.”

The role is remunerated at £42,964 per annum. This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office’s Governance Code on Public Appointments. The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Sir Peter has declared no such political activity.

[Cabinet Office’s Governance Code on Public Appointments](#)

News story: Heritage Lottery

Fund/National Heritage Memorial Fund

Appointments

Appointments have been made for a term of 3 years. Claire Feehily, Sarah Flannigan and Rene Olivieri will start their terms on 01 March 2018 to 28 February 2021, whilst Maria Adebowale- Schwarte and David Stocker will start their terms on 16 May 2018 to 15 May 2021.

Maria Adebowale- Schwarte

Maria is an inclusive place and urban renewal strategist, and the Founding Director of Living Space Project, a place making and green space think tank and consultancy. She has over twenty-five years of hands on and strategic expertise in national and international organisations with a major place, heritage, environment and grant making focus. And, has been an advisor for several funding programmes, amongst others, the Big Lottery, NESTA, Artists Project Earth and Natural England. Maria's current public appointment roles include a board member of the Environment Agency, the Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund's South East Committee, and a Commissioner on the Mayor of London's Sustainable Development Commission. She's also a former commissioner of English Heritage. She holds a first degree in Organisational Studies and Business Law from the University of Lancaster, a Masters in International Law from SOAS, University of London, and is a recipient of a Clore Social Leadership Fellowship. Maria's the author of the book 'The Place Making factor' based on her research and experience of using place led thinking as a disruptor of siloed grant making and philanthropy.

Claire Feehily

Claire is a qualified accountant and MBA and has particular expertise in financial and risk governance, and in helping organisations to engage properly with those who use services and to learn from what they say.

She has more than 30 years' experience at executive and then non-executive levels across the public and charitable sectors.

Board non-executive experience includes serving on three NHS boards since 2010, and Claire is currently a non-executive director at Gloucestershire Hospitals Trust, following four years as Chair of Healthwatch Gloucestershire.

Currently, Claire has one other government appointment as NEBM and Audit Chair at the National Archive (Remuneration approx 12k per annum). She also holds board positions with The Guinness Partnership (to September 2018), Alliance Homes and volunteers as a Trustee with Stroud and Cotswolds Citizens Advice and as a Committee member with the National Trust.

Claire's academic background was originally in modern history and she completed a first degree at King's College London and worked in the archive

of the War Studies Dept. there. She later gained a PhD in English in 2008 from London University, examining the political debate about how to teach the humanities and literary heritage, and taught at Birkbeck College and the School of Advanced Study. She has particular research and teaching interests in Cultural Memory and has published on the memorialisation of military conflict. She is currently working on the University of Bradford archive of Dr William Allchin, POW, psychiatrist and peace builder.

Sarah Flannigan

Sarah has been Chief Information Officer at EDF Energy since 2016. She was previously CIO at the National Trust where she led a major 3 year digital transformation programme. Sarah was named "European CIO of the Year" in 2017. She is a member of the Board of Trustees at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and of the Board of Governors at Wells Cathedral School.

Rene Olivieri

René Olivieri was for many years the chief executive of the international scientific and scholarly publisher, Blackwell Publishing. Under him Blackwell became the leading publishing partner for scientific academic and professional societies world-wide. He continues to mentor senior management teams in the media and technology sectors on innovation, new business models and cultural change. He is a non-executive director of IOP Publishing and has also been the Chair of several start-up companies.

He continues to play a role in the development of higher education. He served on the Board of the Higher Education Funding Council for England between 2008 and 2014 and is a member of the Chancellor's Court of Benefactors at Oxford University. René is passionate about protecting the natural environment and improving farmed animal welfare.

Between 2012 and 2017 he was the Chair of the Wildlife Trusts and, prior to this, Chair of Tubney Charitable Trust.

He takes a keen interest in the performing arts, and particularly in regional theatre. He has been the Chair of the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry and he and his wife are long-time supporters of the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-on-Avon.

David Stocker

David is hon. visiting professor at the University of Leeds and works in the heritage sector in Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. He has worked as an archaeologist and architectural historian in the heritage sector since 1978 and has held posts with many heritage charities, English Heritage (1986-2012) and the Heritage Lottery Fund, where he sits on the East Midlands Committee.

David's interests lie principally within medieval archaeology (buildings, churches, settlement and landscape), about which he has written many articles and books.

He is currently a trustee of the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, trustee and President of the Lincoln Record Society, and also Council for British Archaeology (CBA) nominee to the Council of the National Trust. The role is remunerated at £6,560 per annum. This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Maria Adebawale- Schwarte, Sarah Flannigan, Rene Olivieri and David Stocker have declared no such political activity. Claire Feehily has confirmed that she is a member of the Labour Party and that she pays an annual membership subscription.