

Press release: Girls' education to be central pillar of UK foreign, development and defence policy

Championing girls' education to promote global stability will be at the heart of UK foreign, development and defence policy to positively transform the lives of women and girls in conflict settings, senior ministers have agreed.

At an event today (16 January) at the Foreign Office, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt, Minister of State for the FCO and the PM's Special representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon and Defence Minister Mark Lancaster will launch the UK's fourth National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security. The plan sets out how the UK will support women in conflict zones around the world to play an active role in ensuring peace and security in their communities.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt said:

From Somalia to Syria, and from Burma and Afghanistan, women have been instrumental in the development of the UK's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

It's a sad truth that women suffer disproportionately all around the world during times of crisis. It's essential to harness the huge potential of the next generation to work towards a more secure, more prosperous future. We know that women can be agents of change which is why DFID is placing women at the very heart of its peace, security, education, and humanitarian programmes.

Minister of State for the FCO and the PM's Special representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

Conflict affects whole communities, but women and children are often the worst affected.

This year the Foreign Secretary and I will focus on ensuring that girls in the poorest countries in the world receive at least 12 years of quality education because this is the single most powerful spur to development and progress.

Without question women must have a seat at the table. We know that when women and girls participate in political processes, conflict

resolution and mediation their contribution helps to build a more sustainable peace.

Defence Minister, Mark Lancaster said:

Protecting human rights goes to the very heart of who we are as a nation, and our Armed Forces are leaders in this on an international level.

Our National Action Plan sets out to create a better future for women across the globe: in which there is zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, and in which women and men make a full contribution to the peace and security of all.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict and crisis and they are part of the solution. For example, evidence shows that when women participate meaningfully in peace agreements they are 35% more likely to last at least 15 years.

This NAP sets a bold new direction, putting women and girls at the heart of Britain's work to prevent and resolve conflict for the next five years.

Three new countries have been added to the plan Nigeria, South Sudan, Iraq in addition to DRC, Somalia, Libya, Syria, Burma and Afghanistan. The NAP sets out that to build sustainable and lasting peace and create stable societies, women around the world must be able to participate in peace processes and peacekeeping missions.

Read the nap [here](#)

Notes to Editors:

- The NAP will focus on seven strategic outcomes where the UK can really make a difference (decision making; peacekeeping; gender-based violence; humanitarian response; security and justice; preventing and countering violence extremism; and UK capabilities) which are linked to the four pillars of Women, Peace and Security (prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery).
- The NAP is part of HMG's wider efforts on gender equality, which includes investing in teachers to provide quality education – making sure that children aren't just in school but are learning the foundational skills they need for work and life.
- The Ministry of Defence has been training and mentoring thousands of African, Kurdish and Iraqi forces on combatting sexual violence in conflict situations.

- Through the NAP the UK will tackle violence against women and girls, and will ensure security and justice actors are held accountable to all the populations they serve including women. The UK support is also helping to drive up women's political participation in some of the most challenging contexts across the world.
- As part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, DFID's work is designed to meet the needs of women and girls and insist partners engage with women at all stages of design and delivery.
- UK aid for the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh for example is helping provide: access to female bathing cubicles and sanitary items for more than 35,000 girls and women; counselling and psychological support for over 10,000 women suffering from the trauma of war and over 2,000 survivors of sexual violence; and medical help for over 50,000 pregnant women to give birth safely.

[Press release: Appointments to the Board of the Environment Agency](#)

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, has appointed Judith Batchelar OBE, Robert Gould, John Lelliott OBE and Caroline Mason CBE for first terms to the Board of the Environment Agency. He has also reappointed Lynne Frostick and Gill Weeks OBE for second terms to the Board.

Robert Gould's and John Lelliott's appointments will run from 1 February 2018 until 31 January 2021. Judith Batchelar and Caroline Mason's appointments will run from 1 April 2018 until 31 March 2021. Gill Weeks and Lynne Frostick's reappointments run from 8 September 2017 until 7 September 2020 and 6 March 2018 until 15 March 2021 respectively.

Secretary of State Michael Gove said:

I am delighted to welcome John, Robert, Caroline and Judith. They will bring a strong and broad mix of skills and experience to the Environment Agency.

I am also thrilled that Gill and Lynne will be continuing to help us with meeting the challenges ahead.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency said:

I am looking forward to working with John, Robert, Caroline and Judith on some of the greatest environmental challenges of our time. It was a highly competitive selection process and they will each bring a broad range of experience and expertise to the Environment Agency.

All appointments to the Environment Agency Board are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointments comply with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Board members provide non-executive leadership challenge and support to the Environment Agency's executive through regular Board meetings, committees and groups. They also undertake individual lead roles on relevant issues and with local operational teams.

The Environment Agency is a Non-Departmental Public Body set up under the Environment Act 1995 to take an integrated approach to environmental protection and enhancement in England. It has major responsibilities in flood management, water resources and quality, climate change, land quality, chemicals, pollution prevention and control, waste, conservation and biodiversity, fisheries conservation, air quality and navigation.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. All the appointees have confirmed that they have not undertaken any significant political activity during the past 5 years apart from Robert Gould, who is a member of West Dorset District Council and a former leader of both Dorset County Council and West Dorset District Council.

Environment Agency Board members receive remuneration of £350 per day. Judith Batchelar, Robert Gould, John Lelliott and Caroline Mason will each receive £16,800 per year based on a time commitment of four days per month. Gill Weeks will receive £21,000 per year based on a time commitment of five days per month. Lynne Frostick will receive £25,200 per year based on a time commitment of six days per month.

Biographical details

Judith Batchelar OBE

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Professor Lynne Frostick is both a chartered geologist and a geographer with an academic background in environmental science. She was Professor of

Physical Geography at Hull University from 1996 to 2014 and is now Professor Emerita. She has published over 100 papers and books on environmental physics, modelling and hydraulic engineering. She was the first female Honorary Secretary (1988 – 1991) and second female President (2008-10) of the Geological Society of London. She was a member of the North East Regional Environmental Protection Advisory Committee (1997 – 2006) and a leading member of the 2007 independent Hull Flood Review Group. In 2009, she was named both Yorkshire’s environmental champion and Woman of Outstanding Achievement for leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). She chaired the Government’s Expert Group for Women in STEM for 8 years and sat on the Athena Swan committee based in the Royal Society. She has been awarded an honorary DSc by both Royal Holloway University, London and the University of Hull. Lynne joined the Board of the Environment Agency in 2015.

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[News story: Sir John Kingman announced as Chair of UK Research and Innovation](#)

- science, research and innovation is at the heart of the government's modern Industrial Strategy and John Kingman will play a key role in delivering the ambitious vision of UKRI
- through the Industrial Strategy the government will boost spending on research and development to 2.4% of GDP by 2027, the biggest ever increase in UK R&D spending

Business Secretary Greg Clark has today (Tuesday 16 January) announced that Sir John Kingman will take up the role of permanent chair of UKRI in April this year. Sir John has been interim chair since May 2016 and his appointment follows a fair and open competition.

With a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UKRI will be a major voice for research and innovation in the UK and globally, helping implement the government's ambitious [Industrial Strategy](#).

Boosting research and development (R&D) is key to the Industrial Strategy and the government has committed to the biggest ever increase in R&D investment to 2.4% of GDP by 2027, which could increase public and private R&D investment by as much as £80 billion over the next 10 years.

Commenting on his appointment, Sir John said:

I am thrilled to have been selected to be chair of UK Research and Innovation. This is a moment of exceptional opportunity – and responsibility – to make best possible use of the very large increases in science and innovation funding committed in the Industrial Strategy. In 18 months as interim chair, robust foundations have been laid for the new organisation: we have recruited a superb chief executive and executive team; a formidable Board; and exceptional new talent into key leadership roles at the research councils. It is a huge privilege to be given the opportunity to continue.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Since May 2016 when Sir John Kingman was appointed the interim Chair, he has been central to the formation of UKRI. As we work to establish this new organisation, Sir John has worked tirelessly to develop UKRI's strategy and approach.

Research and development is at the heart of our modern Industrial Strategy, and UKRI will be the vehicle to ensure that we capitalise on innovation and work closely with industry and universities to ensure that we double down on our strengths and make the most of the opportunities in our world leading scientific and research base.

Sir John was appointed as Chair of UKRI on an interim basis in May 2016, to set up the new organisation in shadow form.

Sir John is also Group Chairman of Legal and General PLC. Until July 2016, Sir John was Second Permanent Secretary to the HM Treasury. Over the course of his HM Treasury career Sir John has had a sustained involvement in science and innovation funding and policy; in total he has worked on 5 Spending Reviews which prioritised science and innovation.

In 2004, John personally led the then government's 10 year framework for science and innovation. He has also been closely involved over many years in policymaking on R&D tax credits. In addition to his HM Treasury career, John has worked in the Group Chief Executive's office at BP, been a Lex columnist at the Financial Times and a Managing Director at Rothschild, the investment bank. He is a World Fellow of Yale University, a Trustee of the Royal Opera House and a member of the advisory committee for Jim O'Neill's review on antimicrobial resistance.

As announced in May 2016, in the government's higher education and research white paper, ['Success as a Knowledge Economy'](#), UKRI will be established as a single, strategic body that will bring together the 7 Research Councils, Innovate UK and the research funding from Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

UKRI will ensure that the UK maintains its world-leading research and innovation position by creating a system that maximises the contribution of each of the component parts and creates the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

The post of Chair of UKRI is subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee. The Committee will consider this appointment in due course.