

# Speech: Queen's Birthday Party 2017 in Tirana

“Zoti Kryetar i Parlamentit, Ministra, Shkëlqesi, zonja dhe zotërinj Kam kënaqësinë t’ju mikpres në ditën tonë kombëtare në të cilën festojmë ditëlindjen e nëntëdhjetë-e-një të Madhërisë së Saj, Mbretëreshës. Shpresoj që shqipfolësit mes nesh të më falin që po e vazhdoj fjalimin tim të shkurtër në anglisht.”

As many of you will know the Queen’s official birthday is in June but this year we are celebrating her real birthday which is on 21 April. The Queen was born 91 years ago in 1926, just 14 years after the birth of Albania, and she has ruled for 55 years. Her Majesty is a symbol of continuity in a changing world.

## Queen’s Birthday Party 2017 in Tirana

This has been a year of change for the UK. Here in Albania not only have we changed the date we are celebrating our national day but we have also changed our Ambassador! Back in Britain the people have voted for a rather bigger change, deciding last June that we would leave the European Union. This will mean even more change for the UK as we move to a different relationship with our European friends and partners. Some things will change. But much will not.

Our Prime Minister, Theresa May, is fond of saying that we are leaving the EU not Europe. This remains our continent and its peace, security and stability will remain just as important to us in two years time as it has done in the past and does today. Our foreign interests will not diminish with Brexit but increase. We will see the UK take a more, not less active role in the World. This is particularly true of our engagement with the Western Balkans, which remains an area of real importance to the UK and is especially true of our engagement with Albania.

## Queen’s Birthday Party 2017 in Tirana

This year, we will double the number of British diplomats in Tirana. This big increase in staff is partly to help us work more closely with the government of Albania to tackle the threat from organised crime but it is also a reflection of the broadening of our relationship. For example, from next month we will have a resident Defence attaché here in Tirana for the first time in more than a decade. This is a reflection of our close defence relations which last year saw further training for British troops in Albania and this year sees our two armed forces working together as part of NATO’s very high readiness forces.

The British Council is also increasing its presence in Albania and continues to bring to Albania the best of UK culture and education. The British Council has also been active helping to reform higher education and the university

accreditation process. All of this shows that our relationship with Albania is both deep and wide. Albania matters to the UK.

We want an Albania with which we can work together as partners. One with a strong, fair, justice system and one where the politicians work to find solutions not to create problems. We want to see an Albania that promotes political dialogue rather than political confrontation. We want to see an Albania on the path to membership of the European Union. We want to see a successful and prosperous Albania.

I should like to end with just a few words of thanks to those who have made this evening possible. Thank you to our sponsors. Thank you to my excellent, and expanding staff at the Embassy and thank you to my wife Kerry for all her support.

Which leads me to the toast. It is traditional that we have just one toast which is to the Queen. So please raise your glasses to toast Her Majesty "the Queen."

---

## **[News story: Innovate UK appointments confirmed](#)**

The appointments of Gerard Grech, Priya Guha and Simon Devonshire have been confirmed today (21 April 2017) by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Innovate UK finds and drives science and technology opportunities that will grow the UK's economy – delivering productivity, new jobs and exports and keeping the country globally competitive in the race for future prosperity.

The board regularly reviews the management and performance of Innovate UK and ensures the organisation delivers its strategic priorities and that resource is allocated effectively in the delivery of these objectives.

Gerard Grech is currently the chief executive officer of Tech City UK.

Priya Guha is Ecosystem General Manager of RocketSpace, a London start-up space. Priya was a UK diplomat for 20 years, with her most recent post being British Consul General to San Francisco.

Simon Devonshire OBE is co-founder of Talent Cupboard and was Entrepreneur in Residence at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

These appointments have 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.

---

## **News story: Appointment of Alan Wood as a member of the Youth Justice Board**

Alan Wood was the Chair of the Youth Custody Improvement Board (YCIB), which was set up to explore and report on the current state of the youth custodial estate, and recommend how the system could be improved, particularly focusing on current risks to safety and wellbeing. The Board recently published its final report and made a number of recommendations as to how the system could be improved. Many of those recommendations are reflected in our plans to reform the youth justice sector, in which the YJB will play a key role.

As Chair of the YCIB, Alan Wood was charged with identifying the most serious issues in the youth justice system, and is therefore key to ensuring those reforms address them. His past experience including in a number of senior management positions in youth and social care roles makes him particularly well suited to this role, both in terms of his leadership experience and his subject matter expertise.

Under the Governance Code on Public Appointments, which came into effect on 1 January this year, ministers can, in exceptional circumstances, make an appointment without a competition. The Secretary of State has decided to appoint Mr Wood as a Member of the YJB on these terms and, in accordance with the Code, have consulted the Commissioner for Public Appointments, who has accepted the decision.

---

## **News story: Acas council reappointments confirmed**

The reappointment to the Acas Council of the 4 members has been confirmed today (21 April 2017) by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Acas provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law. It supports good relationships between employers and employees which underpin business success.

The Acas Council sets the strategic direction, policies and priorities for the organisation, and makes sure that the organisation meets its agreed strategic objectives and targets. It consists of the Chair and 11 employer,

trade union and independent members, appointed by the Secretary of State.

Sir Brendan Barber, Chair of the Acas Council said:

I am delighted that the Acas Council will continue to benefit from my colleagues' invaluable experience in the field of employment relations. They play an essential role as independent and impartial workplace experts.

I look forward to working with them for another 3 years strengthening our reputation as Britain's number one employment relations service for businesses and employees.

## **Jane McNeill QC**

Jane McNeill is a member and former Head of Old Square Chambers, a leading employment set of chambers. She has been involved in many important and test cases in the fields of employment and discrimination law, including the part-time workers' pensions (Preston) litigation, the test cases in the Supreme Court and Court of Justice of the European Union concerning the calculation of holiday pay (Williams v BA) and the equal pay litigation.

She has acted for individuals, groups of individuals and NHS Trusts in cases at first instance and appellate level involving whistleblowing and the interpretation and implementation of disciplinary processes and procedures.

She has been a Queen's Counsel since 2002, a fee-paid Employment Judge since 2000 and has sat as a Recorder in the County Court since 2006. She is an accredited and practising mediator.

## **Mike Gooddie**

Mike is Director of Human Resources for the Canal & River Trust, prior to that he was vice president of Labour Relations for Asda.

Mike began his career with Shell as a graduate trainee working in both the UK and Australia, before progressing on to senior HR positions with British Airways, GNER and the BBC. He has held non-executive positions for Manchester Airport Group (MAG), Community Integrated Care (CIC) and York Archaeological Trust (YAT). He is a graduate of Leicester University and a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), and a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts Manufactures and Commerce (FRSA).

## **Neil Carberry**

Neil Carberry is Director for Employment, Skills and Public Services at the CBI, a role he has held since February 2011. Neil has worked at the CBI for the past decade on a wide range of business issues, including employment, employee relations, pay, education, skills and public service reform.

He is a member of the CBI's Management Board. Before joining the CBI, Neil worked in consultancy on HR issues for financial services firms. He is a member of the Low Pay Commission, which makes recommendations about the level of the UK's National Minimum Wage. He has an MSc in Industrial Relations from the London School of Economics and is a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD. He is the Chair of BusinessEurope's Employment Working Group.

## **Paul Nowak**

Paul Nowak was appointed Assistant General Secretary of the TUC in February 2013, and was subsequently confirmed as Deputy General Secretary by the TUC General Council in February 2016.

He has responsibility for a number of key policy areas including public services and transport, and for the TUC's organisation in the English regions and Wales, union organising, inter-union relations and the organisation of the TUC's annual Congress.

These reappointments have 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.

---

## **Press release: Dr Fox: English goods are 'in demand' accross the world**

As Saint George's Day approaches this weekend, International Trade Secretary Liam Fox has celebrated the international demand for quintessential English food and drink around the world.

From strawberries and cream to cheddar cheese and gin – staple products of any English summer party – are proving popular internationally.

This comes as the Department for International Trade has sought to open up new markets to UK producers, launching its new '[integrated export hub](#)' where companies large and small can find live export opportunities along with free advice and support to get exporting.

Right now, there are almost [200 live opportunities](#) for food and drink exporters including opportunities as far-afield from China to India and the Middle East.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox said:

As we celebrate St George's day, it's clear that many other countries around the world will also be enjoying delicious and

typically English food and drink.

From the Middle East to China, products are in demand and more and more producers are making sure they make the most of these opportunities as part of a Global Britain.

Some classic English food and drink exports include:

- Strawberries and cream has long been a favourite refreshing summer treat, enjoyed at classic sporting events like the Wimbledon Tennis Championships and at picnics across the country. Its not just the English enjoying a summer strawberry, as last year £900,000 worth of the classic fruit were exported abroad.
- Other classics like cheddar cheese are also finding a growing following, with exports at over £229 million. One current opportunity for cheddar manufacturers is in Indonesia, while a premium food seller in India has already seen 71 applications from UK producers through DIT.
- With the huge growth in English Gin distilleries in recent years, its little surprise that 'mother's ruin' is also finding a global following and UK gin exports stood at £474,000 last year. The department also has opportunities for any gin producers to go global, with live opportunities for distribution in Greece and QingDao city in China – home to over 9 million people.