

PM statement in Warsaw: 10 February 2022

It's great to be back in Warsaw, thank you again Mateusz for your characteristically warm welcome.

The reason I'm here is because Poland is absolutely critical to our collective European security and the lesson of the last 100 years is that when Poland is threatened with instability, or aggression on the borders of Poland, then we are all threatened and we're all affected.

And I just want to be absolutely clear, when Poland is threatened then the UK stands ready to help, as indeed Poland has always stood ready to help the United Kingdom.

So I'm very pleased again to have the chance to talk to you Mateusz, you're absolutely right in what you said. Much of what we talked about in November has come to pass and that's why earlier today the UK's 45 Commando Unit touched down in Poland.

And those 350 troops join the 150 British troops who arrived here in December in response to instability on the Belarusian border, and the 150 British troops who contribute to NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, are standing shoulder to shoulder with our Polish counterparts to bring stability and security not just to Poland, but to Europe and I would say to the world.

I've just come from seeing Jens Stoltenberg in NATO, where the message I have given, and the one the UK has been giving to all our counterparts, is that we need to work together now to achieve de-escalation and to persuade Vladimir Putin to de-escalate and to disengage.

And as we tirelessly pursue the path of diplomacy to bring an end to the tensions on Ukrainian borders, it is important to remember why we are doing this and why we're putting together this package of sanctions against a possible invasion, why we're doing so much to support and protect Ukraine.

And it's exactly as Mateusz has just said – we won't accept, Poland and the UK won't accept, a world in which a powerful neighbour can bully or attack their neighbours.

And we won't accept it because we believe all people – no matter where they are born – have a right to live safely, choose who governs them and to decide what organisations they aspire to have membership of.

Or, indeed, what bodies they want to cease being members of.

And we will not compromise on that principle.

It's now more than 80 years Mateusz since Polish pilots came to my own constituency of Uxbridge and South Ruislip in West London to help my country

in our fight for freedom. We stood side by side to uphold our values and our principles then, and we stand side by side today.

Thank you all very much.