

Press release: PM call with President Poroshenko: 24 May 2018

A Downing Street Spokesperson said:

“Yesterday evening, the Prime Minister held a telephone call with President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine.

“The two leaders discussed the Minsk process and the situation in eastern Ukraine and the need to tackle instability there.

“The Prime Minister reiterated the UK’s strong support for Ukraine, including our commitment to maintaining pressure on Russia through EU sanctions.

“She went on to discuss how the international response to the poisoning incident in Salisbury had shown that coordinated action by a broad range of allies is the most effective way to respond to Russian aggression.

“They also discussed the announcement by the Joint Investigation Team that the missile which brought down flight MH17 belonged to the Russian army – pointing out that such actions fit into a well-established pattern of Russian aggression.

“The Prime Minister offered the UK’s full support to the investigation team which is looking into the incident, which saw 10 UK citizens lose their lives.

“The Prime Minister and President discussed the importance of Ukraine’s reform agenda, and looked forward to the forthcoming Ukraine reform conference in Copenhagen and the opportunity to demonstrate the progress made.

“The Prime Minister also thanked President Poroshenko for the strong cooperation between Ukraine and the UK ahead of the Champions League Final on Saturday, where 30,000 British fans are expected to travel to Kyiv to see Liverpool take on Real Madrid.”

Speech: Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster speech to Celebrating Israel at 70 event

Thank you Louise and Rob for that very kind introduction.

Your Royal Highness, Chief Rabbi, Your Excellencies, lords, ladies and gentlemen, good evening, Erev Tov.

It's a privilege to be here in the Royal Albert Hall with you this evening and an honour to be addressing you as together we celebrate one of the most remarkable stories that men and women have ever told.

It's the story of a people resolute in their struggle for a better future, but with a dream of peace one day in their land.

It is the story of Israel.

And at the heart of this story lies a simple idea, one which every person in this hall – no matter your faith, colour or creed – can believe in...

And that is the dream of a place to call home...

...a place where communities are born, memories are created, and dreams can flourish.

Israel's story has that truth at its core.

The beginning of the story

David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, once remarked that "to be a realist you must believe in miracles".

And it is fair to say that the story of Israel is one which has the belief in miracles at its heart.

Some two thousand years ago, the Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans. Much of the Jewish community was enslaved or expelled from their land.

But the dream of a land to call home persisted through centuries of exile, and all too often, of persecution.

And then, a hundred years ago, the Balfour Declaration offered a hope that that dream might one day become a reality.

But barely two decades later however, the dream was almost extinguished by one of the greatest crimes in human history.

The evil of the Holocaust was something I learned about when I was still a boy – and not just from the history books or TV documentaries.

Two boys in my class at school had fathers who had, by some miracle, survived Auschwitz.

I still remember vividly how being invited to tea at one friend's house, and how, during the conversation, his dad suddenly rolled up his shirt sleeve to show the death camp tattoo still scarred on his wrist.

The Holocaust, the Shoah, that darkest chapter in human history, serves as a

reminder that all of us, wherever we are from, must stamp out hate and racial prejudice wherever we find it.

But despite all odds, the spirit of solidarity and endurance which sustained the Jewish people through centuries of exile...

...also made possible the rise, out of the horror of the Holocaust, of the nation state of Israel.

The story today

And today, as our Prime Minister, Theresa May, has said, the United Kingdom is proud to stand side by side with Israel as an ally with mutual interests, and as a friend with shared values.

For Israel has grown into a thriving democracy and a prosperous economy...

...where the values of freedom, tolerance and the rule of law lie at its heart...

...where sexual, religious and racial equality is enshrined in law...

...and where argument, disagreement and dissent are hard-wired into the Israeli character.

I'm sure you all know the story of the Jew marooned on a desert island, who showed his rescuers the two synagogues he had built.

"That's my synagogue", he said pointing, "and that's the synagogue I don't go to".

More seriously, whenever I've visited Israel, and whoever has been the Israeli Prime Minister and whatever parties have been in government, I've found their fiercest, their most ardent and relentless critics are there amongst Israelis themselves.

But this is not Israel's only strength...

...Israel is a global leader in upholding the rights of women and members of the LGBT community...

...a leading innovator in science and technology...

...home to some of the world's finest emergency relief teams...

...the proud producer of no fewer than twelve Nobel Peace Prize winners...

...and, as hard as it is for someone coming from a country used to 'nul points', the triumphant winner of Eurovision an incredible four times!

And these strengths directly benefit the United Kingdom too.

We are Israel's second largest trading partner...

...and we are Israel's number one destination for investment in Europe – with

more than 300 Israeli companies operating here.

But our relationship is not simply one between governments – it is about those bonds between our peoples too.

Britain's Jewish population here in Britain is one of the most dynamic and vibrant communities that make up the diverse mix that is our modern United Kingdom.

From business to arts; to health, education, industry and literature – your contribution benefits us all...

Indeed, that is a message I am sure His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge will take to Israel when he visits in the very near future.

It is more than seventy years now since the horror of the genocide was revealed and we understood where antisemitic prejudice could lead.

It is shaming that our country is having to relearn that lesson today.

So let me be absolutely clear: antisemitism, in whatever form, has no place in our society and we will never, ever tolerate it.

It's why the design for our National Memorial to the Holocaust has now been chosen, and why that Memorial will stand next to our Parliament together with an accompanying education centre...

...a reminder that the human tragedies of the past must never be lost from the present, and that we have a duty to teach each new generation the lessons of history.

It's why Theresa May was the first leader to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's modern definition of antisemitism...

...and it's why, whatever the political disagreements between Israel and the United Kingdom have, antisemitism must never be allowed to survive by cloaking itself behind criticism of the policy of a particular Israeli government.

So as these challenges continue, be assured that we are proud to stand side by side with the British Jewish community every step of the way.

The story's future

But it is the future of Israel's story to which we must now focus – and on the next chapter which is to be written.

For if Israel is to truly fulfil that dream that Balfour set out a century ago, and build that home to which it is rightly entitled...

...then it is best placed to do so in a state of peace, both with itself, and with its neighbours – for they are entitled to the dream of a home too.

We long and we pray for that future where, in the vision of the Prophet Isaiah, "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations shall not lift up swords against nations, neither shall they learn war anymore".

The United Kingdom will always support Israel's right and obligation to defend itself and her citizens.

But we believe too that lasting security will come through peace, mutual respect and reconciliation between Israel and all her neighbours.

And it isn't just politicians who want to see a confident and secure Israel able to prosper, and able to live in peace and security alongside an independent, peaceful Palestine state...

...it is young Palestinians from Ramallah and Hebron and Gaza...

...and young Israelis from Sderot and Jerusalem and Tel Aviv...

...they all want the same things as each other...

...to go to school and university together...

...to meet; talk; laugh; debate; learn from each other...

...and ultimately love another.

Like all good friends, the United Kingdom will not shy away from asking difficult questions...

But that is fundamentally why this vision for peace – this dream of a better future – cannot be written by the international community alone.

...it can only be written by the people of Israel and by the people of Israel's neighbours as well.

So as you all do so...

...as you work towards fulfilling that dream born all those years ago...

...as you work towards that universal cause of a place and a community to call home...

...and as you work towards a stronger, safer, more prosperous country that is at peace...

...be assured of this: the United Kingdom will be standing by your side as you write the next chapter not just of your story – but of history itself.

For as Theodor Herzl once said..."if you will it, it is no dream; and if you do not will it, a dream it is and a dream it will stay."

Thank you very much...

...have a wonderful evening...

...and Yom Huledet Sameach, Le Yisrael.

Speech: Minister Mark Field's speech at the Wildlife Crime Reception, House of Commons

Introduction

Good afternoon and thank you to Zac Goldsmith for hosting us, and to International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) for giving me the opportunity to engage with you today.

As we all know, the spectre of wildlife poaching has been with us for decades – I remember hearing about the imminent danger to elephant and rhino populations almost 4 decades ago when I was still at school.

Effect of internet on IWT

What has really changed things and accelerated the urgency of the issue in recent years is the internet. Criminal networks caught on pretty quickly that they could harness the internet to create a marketplace that is not simply local or regional. It is global.

It means that the scale of the illegal trade in wildlife has really taken off. This criminality is now thought to be worth up to £17 billion a year. To give you an illustration of the scale of the slaughter – in just 7 years from 2007 to 2014, Savannah elephant populations are thought to have declined by almost a third.

That sad statistic alone equates to around 144,000 elephants – if they stood trunk to tail they would stretch from here to John O Groats! Or was it Land's End? Well, either way I think you get the point!. It is not just elephants – the illegal wildlife trade is decimating a huge range of species, from the pangolin, killed for medicine and food, to the gentle Sumatran orangutan, of which there are now fewer than 8,000 now left.

Baby orangutan are trapped to be kept as pets. Tragically, for each and every animal reaching market, as many as 5 other die in transit. These crimes not only threaten irreplaceable wildlife with extinction. They not only leave countries and communities bereft of the iconic animals that help define them, and that could sustain livelihoods long into the future.

This illegal trade also fuels, and is fuelled by, corruption. So these criminals are also undermining sustainable development, good governance and the rule of law. This is why it is so vital that we put a stop to the illegal wildlife trade, and close down the online marketplaces for illegal wildlife products.

UK action

This government is playing a leading role at home and on the international stage. Today, my colleague the Environment Secretary, Michael Gove, is introducing the [Ivory Bill in the House of Commons](#) – an important step in highlighting the UK's rejection of this horrible trade.

International action

We are also taking the fight to the poachers and traffickers. Over these past 4 years, the UK government has committed £26 million to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. The British military have provided tracker training for park rangers in key African states, and we have funded the expansion of INTERPOL's operations to track and intercept shipments of illegal wildlife products, including ivory and rhino horn.

The only way to really shut down illegal wildlife trade for good is for countries to work together, so we are also strengthening international partnerships.

IWT conference

In [2014 we hosted the ground-breaking London conference](#) that was praised as a turning point in global co-operation in this field. It secured ambitious agreements from more than 40 governments to take urgent, coordinated action.

To build on all this recent progress we are bringing the conference back to London this October. Please be assured we have even higher ambitions this time.

We will focus on 3 primary objectives:

- first – treating the illegal wildlife trade as a serious organised crime
- second – building coalitions of allies who share our aims
- finally – closing markets for illegal products

Closing online space

As the Adessium report makes clear: we urgently need to close down online marketplaces for illegal wildlife products. I commend IFAW, WWF and TRAFFIC for the progress they made bringing together an alliance of online companies in March to commit to an 80% reduction in the online sale of illegal wildlife products by 2020.

It is encouraging that over 20 companies, including big names like Ebay,

Pinterest, Facebook and Microsoft have already signed up. I hope more will do so, and that this global initiative leads to the end of illegal wildlife sales online.

Innovations

I believe strongly that by working together, and by using the latest technology, we can – and we must – turn the tide on the illegal wildlife trade. Innovations like the ivory fingerprinting kit developed by Dr Leon Barron of King's College London, and Mark Moseley of the Metropolitan Police, will make a huge difference.

With this new technology, enforcement agencies will be able to capture better quality fingerprints from ivory and catch more of the culprits.

I congratulate Leon and Mark, both of whom are here today, on their innovation, and I am delighted to be able to announce that thanks to a generous donation from IFAW, we will be handing out kits to every country that attends the [illegal wildlife trade conference](#) in October.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, imagination, collaboration and commitment like this will help us stop the traffickers. It will not be quick or easy, but we have a range of committed individuals, organisations and governments alongside us.

Our October conference is a great chance to bolster our forces. I look forward to working with you in the lead up to it and beyond. There is no time to lose. Let's work together to stamp out this miserable, criminal trade.

[News story: Scotland voted decisively in 2014 to remain part of the UK](#)

Mr Mundell said:

Scotland voted decisively in 2014 to remain part of the UK. That decision should be respected. The public do not want another divisive independence referendum.

We want to work with the Scottish Government to maximise the opportunities our exit from the European Union will bring. We should all put our energies into making sure we get the right deal for Scotland and the rest of the UK as we leave the EU.

[Press release: Don't use the hard shoulder as a naughty step!](#)

The shocking action on the side of the M4 near Bristol was revealed by Highways England today as the company released a list of excuses given to its traffic officers by drivers who had wrongly stopped on motorways.

Other excuses included a family cooking a meal and someone getting out of a taxi to spend a penny.

But CCTV footage reminds drivers why stopping on the hard shoulder also presents a risk. As many people set out on journeys this bank holiday and half term holidays the answer is to be prepared.

[A narrow escape when an out of control car skidded across the motorway.](#)

Simon Jones, Highways England, Regional Director South East said:

We want everyone to get to their destinations safely. But some people put themselves at risk. The advice is simple: Be prepared. Check your vehicle before you set out to avoid unnecessary breakdowns; don't stop except in an emergency; and if you have to stop, make sure you know what to do.

Drivers often think the hard shoulder is a safe place to stop but over 100 people are killed or injured on the hard shoulder every year. We don't want you to become one of those statistics; we want you to stay safe.

Drivers can get advice about [how to check their vehicles](#) before setting out:

If hot weather is forecast drivers are advised to carry plenty of water to drink.

What to do in an emergency

Always try to exit the motorway immediately if your vehicle is damaged or experiences difficulties. If that's not possible, move into the nearest place of relative safety.

On most motorways this will be the hard shoulder. But on a smart motorway there may not always be a hard shoulder, or the hard shoulder may be open to traffic. In these cases you'll see emergency areas spaced regularly along the motorway. Make your way to the nearest one.

You should follow these steps:

- Use an emergency area if you are able to reach one safely. These are marked with blue signs featuring an orange SOS telephone symbol on them.
- If you can leave your vehicle safely, contact Highways England via the roadside emergency telephone provided in all emergency areas. We will either send a traffic officer to help you, or set the motorway signs to temporarily clear lane 1 to assist you to rejoin the motorway.
- If you cannot get to an emergency area but the vehicle can be driven, move it to the hard shoulder (where provided) or as close to the nearside verge or other nearside boundary as possible.
- In all cases, switch on your hazard warning lights.

If you stop in the nearside lane next to a hard shoulder or verge and feel you are able to exit safely with any occupants, consider exiting your vehicle via the nearside (left hand) door, and wait behind the safety barrier, if there is one and safe to do so.

If it is not possible to get out of your vehicle safely, or there is no other place of relative safety to wait then you should stay in your vehicle with your seat belt on and dial '999' if you have access to a working mobile phone.

For advice on how to drive on motorways, including during an emergency, [visit our guidance page.](#)

Excuses given to Highways England traffic officers by drivers who have wrongly stopped include:

- naughty step – A traffic officer on routine patrol came across a child walking outside of a vehicle walking alongside the motorway on the M4 near Bristol. The car occupants had given the child 'time out' for playing up.
- nice day for a walk – Traffic officers came across an abandoned LGV in a live lane on the M1 near to Northampton Motorway Services. The driver returned 15 minutes later. Apparently he would rather walk into the services rather than use the lorry park.
- hungry – Traffic officers from Dartford found a family congregated on the hard shoulder, cooking a meal as they were hungry.
- festive feast – a crew who had stopped to investigate a car stopped on the hard shoulder of the M6 between with no hazard lights on came across a driver eating a mince pie. She had passed the Stafford South Motorway Services a couple of miles back.
- sleeping dangerously – Traffic officers found the driver of an LGV fast asleep on a verge of the M60. His vehicle was blocking an emergency access route near Cheadle.
- lost – Traffic officers stopped to assist a driver on the hard shoulder of the M1 near Mansfield. She had stopped to look for directions to the crematorium and was ringing her husband for assistance.
- sat nav sagas – A patrol came across a stationary vehicle with no hazard lights on in foggy conditions on the M1 between Chesterfield and Mansfield. The driver walked back up the embankment and got back into the car, which had three passengers, as the traffic officer approached. He had stopped in an emergency area after losing mobile signal for his

sat nav.

- nature calls – A minicab which appeared to be a broken down in a live lane on the M25 had in fact stopped for a passenger to relieve their bladder on the exit slip road going towards Staines-upon-Thames.
- potty break – Traffic officers came across a family who had stopped their vehicle on the hard shoulder of the M6 between Oddendale and Penrith so that a child could use a potty.
- text that can't wait – A patrol stopped with a vehicle on the hard shoulder of the M56 near to Chester Motorway Services. The driver was waiting to receive a text and then going to respond.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.