

Speech: The Great Partnership: Delivering Global Britain

Good morning.

I'm deeply honoured to have been invited to talk to you this morning, to such an esteemed, situationally aware and well-informed audience. It is such a pleasure not to have to explain that when I'm talking about championing the Global Goals, I'm not talking about Panama 4-0.

The video that you have just seen flows from the work we have done to relaunch and reset UK aid so that it better delivers the Global Goals.

So it is fit for purpose in a fast changing diplomatic and economic landscape.

And so that it also works in the national interest.

This was done very deliberately to respond to the public concerns about how we have operated UK aid in the past, based on the public's views and on the values that they hold dear.

Not just to persuade them that we are doing a good thing, but to actually give them a stake in it.

To reconnect them with what they enable. To earn their trust in our action. And to make them proud of their country.

In my speech today I will briefly recap what we have done to achieve that.

How we are changing and how we are changing what we do.

And also resetting our work across government.

So UK aid can deliver for the whole of Whitehall. And the whole of Whitehall can deliver the Global Goals.

But I will also tell you why our reforms cannot stop at Whitehall. Because if they do we will not have understood the opportunity or potential ambition for Global Britain or the necessity of radical reform in how one HMG operates to deliver it.

And why ultimately public approval for UK aid matters so much.

But I am going to start by telling you why Global Britain matters.

At your conference you will contemplate some of the world's greatest challenges for our generation.

Sometimes they seem overwhelming.

How to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East.

Ending extreme poverty in Africa.

To deliver the Global Goals from which we are so far adrift.

Other challenges that you perhaps might not examine today – global health security and antimicrobial resistance.

The need to cope with more extreme weather events.

The challenges of ensuring that new technology is a force for good.

Protecting the environment and biodiversity, dealing with the consequences of climate change.

The sobering realisation that the challenges and crises that we face today are largely man-made – conflict, crime, corruption.

And a fast approaching migration crisis of epic proportions.

A growing number of displaced and stateless people.

The demand for more livelihoods just at a time when robots are making people redundant.

And this is against the backdrop of the good old reliable rules based order being altogether less dependable.

As are some old friends and allies.

And when we have the emergence of new powers and superpowers who will have an increasing say on how the world is run, with which we need to forge new relationships and have a new offer.

The challenge of China, the threat from Russia.

The ever changing shape of violent extremism and terrorism.

Cyber threats.

Organised crime, the drugs trade, the scourge of modern slavery.

All that woe.

The need for a strategy and an action plan to cope with all of that is magnified for our citizens through the prism of social media, which demands the impossible from its politicians – immediate and simple answers to complex, long-burn challenges.

And we look weak.

We look ineffective.

And amidst all of this we have Brexit.

There is a sense.

Just at a time when the world should be pulling together. We are pulling things apart. The world seems to be falling apart.

I know that is how it feels. And how it feels matters.

It affects our ambition. It affects what we believe is possible. It affects our direction as a nation.

So I want you to feel better. I want to cheer you up.

The world is improving. By any standards, or any research, the world is actually becoming a better place.

Over the last few decades we have reduced global poverty by around a billion people, largely thanks to the liberalisation of trade. In 1990 almost 50% more of the world's children are now in school.

We have become more resilient, more able to withstand natural disasters. Since 1990 almost 50% more of the world's children are now in school.

Health has improved dramatically. People are living longer – the number of children dying before their fifth birthday has almost halved from 12 million since 1990. We have the ability to halt Ebola, and plague and famine.

And there will shortly be a proud day, in the not too distant future, when UK aid and British Rotarians finally eradicate polio.

Yes, the Rotarians. That global network of 1.2 million neighbours, friends, leaders, problem-solvers, who want a world where people unite and take action and create lasting change across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

There is goodwill towards the multilateral system, as demonstrated by the landmark deal agreed earlier this year to secure additional resources and reforms to the World Bank. The UK played a pivotal role in securing that deal, which will lead to an increased focus on the poorest and most fragile.

With new technology we have breathtaking possibilities. New solutions to old problems. And a faster way of finding those who can help. One piece of child birthing kit, which helps babies stuck in the birth canal, saving them and their mothers, was invented by an Argentinian car mechanic, who heard about the problem from one of our tech call outs. He said, "Do you know what I've got something in the back that will fix it", and he did, and he will save thousands of lives.

There is growing democracy and human rights across the world. Women, LGBT, minority rights are improving. Sometimes too slowly. But they are improving.

We could even see the first signs of a move towards peace in Afghanistan.

So as you contemplate the challenges facing the world today you should remember how far we've come.

That is important because we seem to lack confidence about the future.

The problem is that all of that good news is eclipsed by what appears to be a crisis of leadership in the West. People feel let down by their leaders and their institutions. With good reason, mind you!

We've had the banking crisis in 2008. Institutions methodically pulling the rug out under the feet of wealth-creating entrepreneurs in order to keep their own balance sheet strong.

Big business cheating the consumer.

The vehicle emissions scandal, the failure of regulations, the failure to protect the consumer.

And my own sector has not been immune from this. Many charities have lost support from hard-working donors and life-long believers due to incompetence, or extravagance, or the tolerance of predatory behaviour towards the most world's vulnerable people.

In recent times, our politics has sometimes failed to lead those it serves. This is true overseas as it is at home. The consensus seems to have melted away.

Despite the British public's generosity towards people on the other side of the world that they will never meet, despite their understanding of the global connections upon which our own health, peace, security and prosperity depends, they are sceptical about how their political leaders are spending their money.

It's not a lack of logic or a lack of love that causes scepticism about the aid budget – it is a lack of trust.

They have had similar feelings about our foreign policy- that it has failed to understand the long-term consequences of a chosen course of action.

And, as we know, there is a view that the executive can no longer be trusted to deploy Her Majesty's armed forces without a parliament check.

Cynicism and pessimism prevails. Love is in short supply. It is easier to give up than try. Or better still, let's not start at all. Better to disengage, better to retreat. To save our resource, to save our energy. Protectionism, tied aid, populism appear a much safer bet.

Have we lost confidence in our own ability and right to exercise hard and soft power? Have we forgotten why we have the values that we do?

Why free trade and freedom matter? Are we afraid of the future?

As we leave the EU we need to get our mojo back. And that is why the people

of this country want a vision set out.

What is Britain's role in the world? What is it that we are trying to get done? How will we do it? What will Brexit look like? What will Global Britain look like? And what does it mean for me?

They apparently don't want a 'safer bet'. They said "no thanks" to that during the referendum.

They want to be part of a nation that does have the inclination and ability to act, to influence, to deter, and to intervene. Even when that means us standing alone.

Brexit was a vote of self-determination of confidence and hope. And its successful delivery will be too.

We want the public to have confidence and trust in our international relations. They want the country and the world, to pull together for their children's sake. They want to unite behind a vision and they want to help.

It is in our national psyche to come together and to get stuck in. Our greatest accomplishments have been driven by that courage and that care. Courage and care.

To fight, whether with arms, or knowledge or science or discovery, argument or compassion against evil, against hunger, and disease and tyranny for humanity's sake.

We are strong because we are leaders.

There will be people who look at the disagreements in our politics and in our international institutions and groupings, and say we are divided and weak. Thinking differently is not a weakness. On the contrary, there are many countries around the world where there is no debate, no disagreement, no alternative opinion. Those disagreements are actually a sign of great strength.

It is the very reason why democracies and democratic organisations are strong. That's why democracies always, always beat dictatorships in the long-run.

So if our old friends and allies seem a little unreliable, or our parliament a little fraught – I urge you not to lose faith in them.

We are strong because we are a democracy and because we embrace international rules.

We believe in democracy because it values diversity. Everyone gets a vote. It is one manifestation of our nation's unselfish values. We believe in sharing, in helping. We volunteer, we pay tax. We donate millions to charities and DEC appeals and UK aid is the pragmatic manifestation of that love.

There will be people who say our actions are outdated, unfit for a changing

world.

I say we are strong because of our values, we are strong because we are capable.

Just think about the incredible response to our diplomatic efforts in the wake of the Salisbury attack.

The esteem in which the UK is held as a development superpower.

And that our Armed Forces are still the prototype others seek to emulate, and the defence partner of choice.

That's what our nation does.

And that means our nation is a protector. It's a wealth bringer. A capacity builder. A problem solver. A life-saver. And a peace broker. A commonwealth member. A global 0.7, 2 per cent nation. At a time when the interests of other nations is so diverse.

At a time when the world is changing so fast.

We are the game changer nation.

What other nation has so much to offer to so many? We are strong because we are capable and we are relevant.

Global Britain is the margin of victory in delivering the Global Goals and a more peaceful, prosperous and secure world.

So we better make sure we do.

That has been the motivation for our rethink at DFID.

To restore faith, to regain that mojo, to be ready to help our nation embrace that opportunity.

In January, I outlined a new higher spending bar for the department. From now on aid money will not just be spent well but we will show that it could not be better spent.

We must do the most good with the money that we have and that means effective aid spending, but also if we can achieve that and help the national interest in a more direct way, then we will do so.

This has led to more co-designed and co-funded projects with other government departments.

We are looking at how UK Aid can work with the Ministry of Defence to support stability and development overseas, in support of national security objectives. We are exploring ideas, such as peacekeeping, disaster relief training for UK and overseas military personnel, and realising the benefits of more joint training.

We should work towards greater cooperation – maximising the most benefit for our nation from our respective budgets, and we should be sweating those taxpayer-funded assets.

We are working with the Department for Work and Pensions to make the International Citizenship Service deliver the skills and confidence boost to help disadvantaged UK young people get into work.

And with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs we are funding projects to protect the environment, to tackle the scourge of plastics in our oceans and protect endangered species.

With trade we are developing a new Brexit ready offer created by both departments and this will connect all we have to offer with the opportunities to invest abroad.

With Health we are developing new treatments and combating antimicrobial resistance.

By funding things that will support the British people or causes that they care passionately about, we do not dilute the good aid does, we double it. We will seek a win for the developing world and a win for the UK in all we do.

Funding decisions will also take into account what nations can afford to spend on their own people and whether they actually do. The World Bank is developing a new Human Capital Index which will help quantify this for the first time, and Bill Gates and I are its first champions.

We are moving from a project-based approach to methodically capacity building in developing nations. We want the healthcare programs to yield healthcare systems for the long run.

My first action as Secretary of State was to set up a new unit to help nations collect tax, and part of our new development offer is a greater effort and the tools to combat illicit money flows and capital flight.

And we will not fund things that others can.

I have spoken also about the reforms that we need to deliver our new offer and our new approach.

The UK's commitment to spend seven pence out of every £10 of income on the world's poorest people is absolutely in line with our national values and our national interest.

But we need to ensure that how we are meeting the 0.7 is sensible and works for the British public in the long term, so we are focused on ensuring that there is nothing that hinders the most effective use of those funds.

We are working with Treasury to ensure that our compliance with that world-leading pledge is done in the most effective way possible. And we will continue to push for reform of the DAC rules where we think they prevent spending on legitimate humanitarian missions and that counting as ODA.

We have won the argument regarding doubling the proportion of our UN peacekeeping costs that count as ODA and we are winning the argument that countries that slide back into poverty can be ODA eligible again.

Within Whitehall, we will continue to work with Treasury and other government departments to ensure we are spending our aid money in the most effective and efficient way possible.

In March, I chaired my first Ministerial group of all government departments that spend ODA, to raise the quality, consistency and coherence of spending along the principles of good quality aid spent in the national interest pursuing of the Global Goals.

DFID is also working closely with the Cabinet Office to support the strategy and governance of the cross government ODA funds; the Prosperity Fund and the CSSF.

These structures together with a maturing NSC, with a fusion philosophy, will ensure that the tools of hard and soft power are used coherently, strategically and effectively.

In April I announced the largest shift in what DFID does and how it will do it in that department's history, which will ensure that we are providing a comprehensive response to the development challenges of the future, dealing with both the direct and indirect causes of poverty.

This will include a clear focus on Africa where DFID, the FCO and others work jointly to deliver a new partnership.

We will step up our engagement with the world's financial centres – critical hubs that determine how money flows into and out of the developing world.

We are investigating whether our own impact is limited by the financial instruments that are currently available to us. For example, is there a case for using new aid instruments such as sovereign lending?

We are looking closely at the development needs of a wide range of countries that have transitioned out of extreme poverty in recent years, but still face challenges, particularly of growth and job creation. We need to work with these countries to build their markets so they can grow.

And as the world relies more on the economies of countries such as China to drive growth, we are looking at how to deepen our partnership with them as their global impact on the rules-based international system and global public goods increases.

In the Middle East, we will continue to respond generously to meet humanitarian needs in Yemen and in Syria, but we will shift relationships with countries like Jordan and Lebanon to increase stability, reduce conflict and build resilience – because it's in their interest and it's in our interest too. So DFID is changing, and we are helping Whitehall get the most impact from ODA, but we are going to go much further still.

We have taken a conscious and methodical approach to break down the silos.

So one HMG can be truly effective.

Around 60 of my team are embedded with the Department for Trade to form a joint team responsible for shaping the UK's future trade arrangements with developing countries.

FCO secondees sit in our building.

From the start of my tenure I have chosen to take my entire ministerial team to Foreign Office prayers, their weekly ministerial meeting. And I have spent time with the leadership team of ambassadors, trade envoys and diplomats in the UK service.

We have had a joint executive board with the DIT.

I am mapping key planning decisions in internationally facing government departments, and when they are taken. So the decisions we take, whether in programmes or replenishments are the best informed and the most impactful.

My goal was to replicate the tight-knit country teams we see in our embassies and missions around the world here in Whitehall.

There have long been calls for this close working and I am proud that its my department DFID, which has reach and relevance, into every government department, that is delivering that culture change.

I know people get very excited about the machinery of government, but where the real action is lies beyond Whitehall.

Because although government can be a catalyst, an enabler, it is not government that will deliver Global Britain.

It is the sum of what we as a nation have to offer.

It is our town-halls, our great cities, our business and entrepreneurs, our technology, our science base, our education institutions, our creative law, our tax inspectors.

I'm tempted to say, Harry Kane's right boot. Harry Kane's left boot.

The city of London, our civil society and our social enterprises, our faith and community groups.

Of the five priorities I announced in that reset of UK aid earlier this year, the fifth was the Great Partnership.

At the same time as we unite Whitehall around a more coherent ODA offer, we will unite the nation behind a national mission, in the national interest.

Global Britain delivering Global Goals. To connect all our nation has to all that it can help.

And that is why the trust of the British public in what we do with their money to help the world's poorest is critical.

Because we want them to help. Because without their help, without their talents, without their entrepreneurial spirit, their business opportunities, their inventions, their discoveries and without connecting all citizens with those elsewhere in the world who share their ambitions we will not deliver those ambitions.

Global Britain is about looking out into the world and seizing the opportunities that come from those freedoms we gain by leaving the EU.

But it also needs to be about our own communities and organisations, businesses, charities, institutions and the people that make them.

DFID is already doing this through UK aid match, and our new small grants programme. The diversification of our suppliers and other initiatives give us a good base to work from. But we will go much further, working strategically with big business, and building networks of entrepreneurs, civil society, and community groups, to connect them with people and opportunities.

So as well as seeing us in places like Singapore and Dubai in the future you will also see DFID in Belfast and Glasgow and Newcastle and in fact every region of the UK, talking to local businesses who are keen to bring their expertise and skills to help the world's poorest. As part of a cross-government commercial approach, my teams have already been to Birmingham, Leeds and Cardiff to discuss how businesses there can apply for DFID funding.

This is about harnessing all we have to offer as a nation and the spirit of our times to tackle the remaining challenges of our times.

That is why the public's view of the strategy and execution of our diplomacy, our development assistance and our defence of this nation is critical.

Because they are critical to its delivery. Because the world needs their leadership. And their humanity.

Want a vision for Global Britain? Then look at the people of this country, look at who we are.

Courageous, compassionate, committed to democracy. And with those values, just think what we can become. Thank you.