

News story: David Mundell in Brussels: Getting the best deal for the whole of the UK

From:

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The Scottish Secretary was in Brussels to discuss how the UK Government is representing Scotland as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell met with Scottish MEPs, EU academics and business representatives in Brussels today [Thursday 9 February], to discuss how the UK Government is representing people and business interests in Scotland.

Mr Mundell also met with other European member states while in Brussels, as part of a two-day programme of European engagement on economic, social and cultural matters. Tomorrow [Friday 10 February] he will travel to Berlin.

Speaking after the meetings, Mr Mundell said:

The UK government has been forming a strong UK-wide evidence base as we prepare for negotiations to forge a new, mutually-beneficial partnership with Europe. Today I set out how the Scottish Government and the UK Government are working together to ensure we get the best deal for Scotland and the whole of the UK.

I also met representatives from a number of EU member states, and I was heartened to find a willingness to work with the UK as we leave the EU – underlining that we are leaving the EU but not leaving Europe.

Today [Thursday 9 February] Mr Mundell met:

- UK MEP Vicky Ford, chair of the European Parliament's single market committee.
- European thinktanks CEPS, Open Europe and Bruegel.
- The Permanent Representatives of several key European partners, including Italy, Greece, Belgium and the Netherlands.

- The CBI's Brussels representative.

Mr Mundell's visit is part of the UK Government's determination to get the best possible deal for Scotland and all parts of the UK as we leave the EU. This direct engagement will ensure that key figures in Brussels understand the UK's ambitions in delivering a deal that works for the UK and all of its nations.

In Berlin Mr Mundell will meet Scottish academic and business interests, and host a reception for the Edinburgh International Film Festival at the British Embassy. This will showcase the Edinburgh festival to the world's cinema industry, who will be in Berlin for the Berlinale.

[Speech: Government at your service:](#) [Ben Gummer Op-Ed](#)

To govern is to serve – that principle is in question.

As the Prime Minister has reflected, what occurred last June represented a direct challenge to the way that government operates and interacts with its citizens. Our collective faith in democracy and the relationship between the citizen and the state has faltered.

The referendum vote was a message not only to leave the European Union, but to address that gap that has come to separate those who govern and those whom we seek to serve.

If governing is to serve the people, it is the consistent delivery of effective and efficient public services for the citizen that underpins everything we do as a government. But while the vital work to improve and reform our everyday public services will continue throughout this Parliament – building upon fantastic achievements by my predecessors – there remains the question not simply of how public services work better for the user, but what public service actually means to the individual citizen.

Indeed, this is a question that transcends the professionalism and dedication of the thousands of committed civil servants I have the privilege of working with every day. They go to work wanting to do things for the better and for the public good. Yet that genuine spirit of public service is lost in the opaque interface that currently exists between the citizen and the state.

In too many of their interactions with government, the public is made to feel as though they are the servants of the government, rather than the other way around.

And it is not simply the user who is disadvantaged by this relationship. Public servants are not able to fulfil their vocation. We have asked them to work in poor buildings, to antiquated working patterns, in excessively hierarchical organisation structures, and with sub-optimal technology. By reducing the ability of our public servants to work productively, we are compromising their ability to serve the public.

It is my simple ambition to reverse that relationship. I want to see a revolution in the way we deliver public services – so that people up and down our country feel that government is at their service, at every single stage in the journey and at every single moment of every interaction.

The public has a right to expect the same quality of service from the government as they do from private providers.

Whether it is [filling in a tax return online](#), [paying council tax](#), [claiming Universal Credit](#), applying for a grant of probate, visiting a government building or [applying for a driving licence](#), the citizen's journey must be as efficient and smooth as possible – all while maximising value for money for the taxpayer and delivering our commitment to be the most transparent government in the world.

That is why I am today announcing four areas in which we will deliver the profound transformational shift that is necessary to restore faith in our democracy.

First, we will drive forward a renewed focus on digital government as the means to deliver services for the taxpayer. Today we are publishing our Government Transformation Strategy, outlining our commitment to utilise the virtues of technology to reshape government by ensuring millions of people are able to access online the services they need, whenever they need.

As well as moving as many services online as possible, we must harness the value of open data as a means to innovate and improve the range of services available to the public and enhance the transparency of government. We will appoint a new Chief Data Officer – alongside the assembly of a Data Advisory Board – in order to best align our efforts to make the best use of data across government and drive our open data and data transformation policies.

Third, we will work to ensure that our Civil Service has an equality of representation around the United Kingdom, so that public servants have a depth of experience of the public they serve. The Cabinet Office is currently reviewing the location of government agencies and arms-length bodies, and will consider relocating them where they could generate local areas of expertise, support private sector growth and enable a fairer distribution of Civil Service expertise, especially at a senior level.

And fourth, we will deliver all of these changes – and more – while maintaining this Government's constant drive to identify and drive efficiencies in government, root out fraud and error wherever possible, and make considerable savings for the hard-working taxpayer.

Every single member of the public deserves a government that is responsive, accountable and effective – twenty-four hours a day, every day of the week.

As I hope I am able to convey to you this morning, we will deliver our commitment to transform the relationship between the citizen and the state so that the latter serves the former – not the other way round. Only by doing so will we deliver the Prime Minister's commitment to build a country that truly works for everyone.

[News story: Applying for the 2017 Clinical Excellence Awards](#)

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ACCEA announces details of the 2017 Clinical Excellence Awards for new awards and renewals.

The 2017 Clinical Excellence Awards round will open on Tuesday 28 February and will close at 5:00pm on Tuesday 25 April. During this time, ACCEA will accept applications for new national awards and for some national award renewals.

You will need to put in a renewal application if:

- you received your current award in the 2013 round
- your award was last renewed in 2012 (awarded in 2008, 2003, 1998)

In some cases, consultants will be renewing out of the usual cycle. Awards are reviewed earlier if there is a change in job, or a significant change in job plan.

It is your responsibility to apply for renewal at the correct time. You can check whether your award is due to be renewed by [logging-in to your account](#). Dates for your renewal round can be found in 'award details'.

Please check that your contact details are up-to-date on our [online system](#) to make sure you receive reminder e-mails about your renewal and other communications from ACCEA.

We will publish the refreshed application guidance to [the ACCEA website](#) ahead

of the round opening – there are no significant changes from the previous version.

[News story: Graduate roles available: apply to Innovate UK](#)

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We're inviting university leavers from across various fields of study to join our graduate scheme and work at the heart of UK innovation.

Innovate UK is recruiting for 16 graduates to fill cross-disciplinary roles across its directorates. This includes the sector teams, development directorate, operations and information technology and business change.

We are seeking applications from determined, bright, goal-orientated graduates. The two-year programme will provide on-the-job training and tailored learning and development to help graduates build skills that will further their careers.

[Why apply to Innovate UK's 2017 graduate scheme](#)

The launch of the graduate scheme comes at a time when UK government has reaffirmed its commitment to science and innovation. Its [Industrial Strategy](#) aims to build on British areas of excellence through innovation to grow the UK economy and improve living conditions for all.

Ruth McKernan, Chief Executive, Innovate UK, said:

Innovation doesn't just happen. Aspiring business entrepreneurs rely on Innovate UK to help them realise their ideas and take them to market. We need good people to make this happen and support the UK to be cutting edge. If you're a recent graduate with an interest in innovation we could be just the place to start your career.

We are looking for people who have either graduated with an undergraduate or postgraduate qualification in the past year or are set to do so within 2017. The range of roles available means we will consider applicants across different fields of study. Applicants should be predicted or have achieved a 2:1 or above.

Speech: PM press conference with Italian Prime Minister Gentiloni: 9 February 2017

It is a great pleasure to be able to welcome Prime Minister Gentiloni to Downing Street. Just as I chose to visit Italy shortly after coming into office, Prime Minister Gentiloni has made the UK one of his first trips – and I think that underlines the importance that we both place on the long-standing relationship between our 2 countries.

As I have said before, Britain is leaving the European Union – but we are not leaving Europe – and a global Britain that stands tall in the world, will be a Britain that remains a good friend and ally to Italy and to all our European partners.

So we have had important discussions today on the future of our bilateral relationship as the UK leaves the EU; and on a number of areas at the heart of Italy's Presidency of the G7. And we have agreed to establish a regular bilateral summit between the UK and Italy.

First, the UK remains committed to triggering Article 50 by the end of March and last night we moved a step closer with the successful passage of the Bill in the Commons. As I have said, the priority for the UK in the negotiations ahead will be to seek a new, comprehensive, bold and ambitious free trade agreement with the European Union today we talked about the importance we both place on our trade.

The UK is Italy's seventh largest export market for goods, worth over 22 billion euros a year, and we do vital business in agriculture, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and defence. For example, already this year the UK government has signed a £271 million deal with Leonardo Helicopters to provide maintenance for our Wildcat helicopters, protecting hundreds of skilled jobs in Yeovil.

And together with other free trade deals we intend to do, I am determined that a global Britain will be a great champion of free trade in a way that can only be good for British and Italian businesses and jobs.

A global Britain will also be a leading partner in addressing the wider challenges that Prime Minister Gentiloni and his government have put at the heart of [Italy's G7 presidency](#) this year; including making the global economy work for everyone, finding better solutions to managing the huge population movements we are seeing, and keeping up the pressure on Russia in response to its actions in Ukraine.

Italy has been engaged in a long debate about how the benefits of prosperity

can be shared by more people. And we are having a similar debate in Britain, where we have embarked on an ambitious programme of economic and social reform to spread wealth and opportunity more fairly across our country. And I hope that this year's G7 can help us go further in working with all our international partners to shape a global economy that truly works for everyone.

That same co-operation is vital for our security too. And just as we do in Afghanistan and at the forefront of the international coalition against Daesh, Britain and Italy will continue to work together for the security of all our citizens. And global Britain will continue to play a leading role in Europe's security through the NATO alliance.

We will also continue to work together in tackling the migration crisis in the Mediterranean. Italy has become the main arrival point for illegal migration into Europe, with over 180,000 people arriving in 2016. But this is not just a problem for Italy, it is a problem for us all. And we need to work together to find better solutions to the huge population movements we are seeing, so refugees don't have to risk their lives on dangerous journeys and so we control the unmanageable economic migration that is neither working for migrants nor for our own populations.

We both strongly support the comprehensive and co-ordinated approach agreed at the [EU Summit in Malta](#) last week. This includes seeking an inclusive political settlement to stabilise Libya which will not only help to tackle migration flows but also counter terrorism. And I welcome the agreement that was signed between the Italian and Libyan governments last week on migration and on strengthening border security.

Britain and Italy will continue to work together closely and I hope that through Italy's G7 presidency we can shape a new approach to managing mass population movements that is in the interests of all those involved. We must also do everything possible to protect men, women and children from trafficking, sexual violence and labour exploitation. And I am grateful that Italy has put modern slavery on the G7 agenda for the first time and hope that we can enhance the joint working between our law enforcement agencies to cultivate a new radical, global and co-ordinated approach to defeat this vile crime that runs counter to our deepest values.

Finally, on the situation in eastern Ukraine, I emphasised the UK's continuing concern over Russia's aggressive and destabilising actions and the drastic deterioration in the humanitarian situation that we have seen recently. And it is vital that the international community continues to exert pressure and that we continue to maintain sanctions on Russia until the Minsk agreements are fully implemented.

I want to thank you Prime Minister for your visit and for the constructive conversations we have had.

I believe that today we have laid the foundations for continuing the strong and successful relationship between our 2 countries – and I look forward to working with you, Prime Minister, on your G7 agenda and on the UN Security

Council this year, and on shaping a new partnership between Britain and the EU that is in the interests of us all.