

[Press release: Foreign Office concerned at conviction of Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny](#)

From:

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Part of:

The re-trial concluded by finding Alexei Navalny guilty and re-imposing his original five year sentence.

On 8 February 2017 a Russian court convicted Russian opposition politician, Alexei Navalny, on charges of embezzlement. The original case in 2013 was re-run after the European Court of Human Rights said Alexei Navalny was denied a fair trial.

An FCO Spokesperson said:

We are concerned at the conviction handed down to Russian opposition politician, Alexei Navalny. The judgement once again raises questions about the selective application of the rule of law in Russia. The European Court of Human Rights ruled that the same charges in 2013 were politically motivated.

The conviction of Mr Navalny reflects a worrying trend in Russia where the space for public debate and legitimate opposition is shrinking ever further, and where political activists and civil society are facing increasing pressure. The UK urges Russia to uphold the principles of democracy and support political pluralism.

Further information

[News story: David Mundell in Brussels: Getting the best deal for the whole of](#)

the UK

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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.