

## [News story: Foreign Secretary responds to UNSC vote on chemical weapons use in Syria](#)

It is deeply disappointing that Russia and China have blocked the UN Security Council from taking action in response to the appalling use of chemical weapons in Syria. The Security Council's own investigation has found attacks were committed by the Syrian regime and Daesh on the Syrian people. Despite support from the majority of the Security Council, Russia, along with China, has chosen to prevent action.

Along with our international partners, the UK will continue to seek justice for the victims of these heinous chemical weapons attacks and work to deter the further use of chemical weapons in Syria and elsewhere.

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## [Public want paedophiles dealt with properly – Diane Abbott](#)

**Diane**

**Abbott MP, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary**, speaking in response to remarks from Chief Constable Bailey, said:

“These comments are deeply troubling. The public are right to demand that this crime is treated with the utmost seriousness.

“Talk of police forces who ‘cannot cope’ will fuel concerns that this is motivated by lack of resources.

“Labour has repeatedly warned about the consequences of Tory cuts to the police budget and to overall police numbers.

“It's not good enough for ministers to say that they expect these crimes to be investigated properly, when their cuts are placing the police in an impossible position.”

**Ends**

**Notes  
to editors**

– Reports of Chief Constable Stephen Bailey's remarks are here  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-39112911>

– Since 2009 total police officer numbers have fallen by  
20,000

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-36857326>

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## **News story: Foreign Secretary announces new Foreign and Commonwealth Office Special Envoy for Gender Equality**

Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, yesterday addressed an audience of key policy makers at a reception looking forward to International Women's Day. He announced a new Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper. Joanna will spearhead the UK's efforts to deliver a coherent international approach to ensuring the rights of women and girls, working closely with Whitehall departments, civil society, academics, and other Governments.

The Foreign Secretary spoke of his personal commitment to addressing gender inequality in all its forms. He argued in particular that unequal access to education, itself flowing from gender prejudice and discrimination was a major barrier to women's empowerment.

Speaking at the event, the Foreign Secretary said:

The sombre truth is that today 61 million girls between the ages of 6 and 14 do not have the chance to go to school. They have the same right to an education as anyone else – and at least as much potential and ability – but too many girls in too many countries endure the supreme injustice of being denied the opportunity to attend school.

If you want to increase prosperity; stabilise population growth; improve child nutrition; and reduce child marriage, the single most effective remedy is to ensure that all girls go to school.

I hope that every national leader will wake up to the benefits –

and the essential justice – of educating the daughters of their country just as surely as they educate their sons.

The FCO are taking forward the global agenda of equality support projects to increase women's empowerment around the world, challenging gender stereotypes of what a "traditional" women's role is.

Justine Greening, Minister for Women and Equalities, described the continuing efforts to promote gender equality in the UK. By marrying up the domestic and international aspects we showcase UK leadership in this field giving us greater credibility to encourage like-minded partners and to advance action on gender equality in multilateral fora.

Justine Greening, Secretary of State for Education, said:

No woman should be held back in life because of her gender and I'm incredibly proud of this Government's work to help women around the world to fulfil their ambitions. Here in the UK we now have record numbers of women in work, and we have more women than ever before on the boards of the UK's top companies. Internationally, our investment in foreign aid is helping girls in the developing world to get an education.

We have much to celebrate ahead of International Women's Day – but there is still more to do. We are going further to deliver economic empowerment for women by requiring large employers to publish their gender pay gaps for the first time ever. We have pledged to eliminate all violence against women and girls, backed by £80 million funding. And we are supporting girls to take careers in male dominated industries so we have better gender balance in our workplaces.

On her new appointment, Joanna Roper, Special Envoy for Gender Equality said:

I'm delighted to have been appointed as the FCO's first ever Special Envoy for Gender Equality. This is really important work. Gender inequality is still too common. We must break down the barriers that hold women back.

More than 350 people attended the event held at the Foreign Office, including a number of Ministers and Parliamentarians, including Emily Thornberry MP, Dominic Grieve MP and Jess Phillips MP. Civil Society organisations including Stonewall, Womankind Worldwide and Oxfam and senior diplomats also attended were also present.

**Joanna Roper, FCO Special Envoy for Gender Equality**

[Introductory video](#)

## Further information

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# [With virtual and augmented reality, UN 'ideas forum' to explore collaboration on Global Goals](#)

28 February 2017 – Policy makers, activists and private sector representatives from over 80 countries will join gaming experts and simulators tomorrow in Bonn, Germany, at the start of the first “playable” sustainable development conference organized by the United Nations and partners.

According to Mitchell Toomey, the Global Director at the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Action Campaign, the Global Festival of Ideas for Sustainable Development is designed to bring together diverse communities and come up with ideas on sustainability to let the “crowd” decide what happens next.

“The whole concept is taken from the great experience that the UN was able to participate in with the designing of the SDGs [...] ‘let’s ask everybody what should be in the next agenda’,” Mr. Toomey told *UN News*.

“By opening a lot of different channels, including the My World Survey and The World We Want [...] over 10 million people eventually became involved in that process,” he added.

Organized in Bonn, Germany, from 1-3 March, the Festival will see participants transform into “active players” to come up with new ideas on addressing global challenges.

Using the gaming app 2030 Hive Mind – a real-time policy simulation application – participants will explore collaboration to achieve the SDGs by 2030. They will also have to make tough choices and trade-offs along the way.

The idea to use the gaming app came from the need to “stay serious” in tackling development challenges and the importance of engaging and being approachable, explained Mr. Toomey.



Mitchell Toomey, the Global Director at the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Action Campaign. Photo: UN News/Cristina Silveiro

“[The app is] very interesting as it relies on people coming together, sharing what they know, trading policies and advice, collaborating, bringing

good ideas to crescendo by getting enough people to think about them and support them at the same time,” he added.

“The goal is to provide a way to develop policies, but also to campaign around that, by walking around the event and making sure others are supporting the policies that you are, and those who do that the best will get the best scores.”

The introduction of the app also aims to engage with everyone on the topic of sustainable development and SDGs so that the goals don't remain in the policy domain alone and to encourage everyone to take part in the issue.

The festival also features a virtual reality zone (VRZone) to showcase, in 360-degrees, content produced across the UN system and to tell stories that inspire and generate empathy, action and positive social change. The series provides a deeper understanding for those living in the most complex development challenges, catalysing urgency for those most in danger of being left behind if the SDGs are not met.

The Global Festival of Ideas, the first in a series of annual forums, is hosted by the UN SDG Action Campaign in partnership with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) with the support of the German Government.

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## Taiwanese man dies of H7N9 bird flu

A Taiwan resident died of the H7N9 avian flu virus Monday evening, 23 days after the infection was confirmed, the local disease control agency said Tuesday.

The man, 69, contracted the virus on Feb. 4 and died in hospital on Feb. 27 after medical treatment failed, according to the agency.

The man, from Kaohsiung, initially felt ill on Jan. 23 when he was visiting Guangdong Province on business. He returned to Taiwan on Jan. 25 but was tested negative for bird-flu at a hospital.

The patient felt symptoms such as fever, coughing and breathing difficulties on Jan. 29, and was diagnosed with pneumonia. He was hospitalized on Feb. 1, and confirmed as having the avian-flu virus three days later.

The man was the first Taiwan resident and second person to die of H7N9 on the island, where a total of five human H7N9 cases have been confirmed, according to local media.

The first person to die from the virus in Taiwan was a mainland resident.