

PM call with President Ursula von der Leyen: 26 October 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen this afternoon.



The Prime Minister spoke to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen this evening.

The leaders stressed the importance they both place on the relationship between the UK and EU, and on working together as friends and allies.

The Prime Minister pointed to the united response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, particularly on the implementation of unprecedented sanctions, as an example of the value of UK-EU cooperation.

The Prime Minister and President von der Leyen agreed that the UK and EU have much in common, not least the challenges we are facing in areas like the economy and climate change. They resolved to work closely together to tackle those challenges.

On the Northern Ireland Protocol, the Prime Minister restated his preference for exploring a negotiated solution to the current issues.

The Prime Minister and President von der Leyen looked forward to meeting in person soon.

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[PM call with Taoiseach Micheál Martin: 26 October 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to the Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin this evening.



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to Taoiseach Micheál Martin this evening.

The leaders agreed on the vital importance of a strong relationship between the UK and Ireland and expressed their determination to build on that friendship in the coming months.

The Prime Minister welcomed Ireland's ongoing support for Ukraine, and the leaders agreed on the importance of continued international unity in the face of Putin's aggression.

Discussing the Northern Ireland Protocol, the Prime Minister set out that his preference remained a negotiated outcome and hoped all parties would approach the current challenges with pragmatism and goodwill.

The leaders agreed on the urgent need for a functioning executive in Northern Ireland.

Both undertook to continue discussions in the coming weeks and months.

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[Morad Tahbaz: Lord Ahmad's statement,](#)

26 October 2022

Press release

Foreign Office Minister Lord Ahmad has called on Iran to release Morad Tahbaz.



Lord Ahmad said:

The Tahbaz family have confirmed that Morad has been returned to Evin prison by the Iranian authorities. By continuing his horrendous ordeal with these cruel tactics, Iran sends a clear message to the international community that Iran does not deliver on its commitments.

We call on Iran to release Morad so he may re-join family in Tehran immediately. We will continue to work closely with our US partners to hold Iran to account, and to secure Morad's permanent release and departure from Iran.

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[Secretary of State says education key to marking 25th anniversary of Belfast Good Friday Agreement](#)

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris has met with young people at Queen's University Belfast as he discussed plans to mark the 25th anniversary of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement in 2023.

Mr Heaton-Harris was welcomed today (Wednesday 26 October) by Queen's University Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Greer, who discussed the university's upcoming programme of events to mark the anniversary. This includes a major international conference organised jointly with the [Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice](#), at Queen's.

Speaking with students as he visited One Elmwood, Queen's University's new

Student Centre and Students' Union, the Secretary of State highlighted the vital role which education plays in improving understanding and recognition of the transformative role that the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement has played, and continues to play, in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

He stated: "The 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement marks an extraordinary achievement for Northern Ireland, with the Agreement helping to lay the foundation of a more peaceful and prosperous Northern Ireland that we see today.

"I'm delighted to hear about Queen's University Belfast's programme, and to discuss with young people what the anniversary means to them – they are key to safeguarding the benefits of the Agreement for the next generation.

"This anniversary moment provides us with a great opportunity to ensure that young people in Northern Ireland, and across the entirety of the UK, are well informed and can fully engage with the progress that has been made since the signing of the Agreement.

Queen's University's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ian Greer, said:

"Queen's University Belfast is honoured to be the host the signature event to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

"With current world leaders, as well as architects of the original Agreement, coming to Belfast to mark the anniversary it is fitting that it takes place in an institution which places social and civic responsibility at the heart of what it does.

"In partnership with the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, the three day conference will offer a unique opportunity to both reflect on the achievements of the Agreement and to discuss the challenges and solutions needed to drive forward a peaceful and prosperous future for the region."

ENDS

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