

20 years on, 10 resolutions later...Resolution 1325

Well, thank you very much indeed, Madam President, and thank you for coming here today. And thank you, particularly along with the German Minister, for creating an environment where over two thirds of the people sitting around this table are women. So that is fantastic, a taste of things to come, and I hope you will visit us often.

I also wanted to congratulate you for the fantastic record of South Africa with that 30 percent figure that you gave us and your military colleagues sitting in the chamber. That's incredibly impressive. Thank you for your commitment to carry on producing women for these peace support, peacekeeping operations. The United Kingdom joins you in that commitment. Sadly, we're only at 17 percent so you have a march on us, Madam President, but I think nevertheless, there is all more that all of us can do in that regard.

As other speakers have said, this is a timely debate a year ahead of the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325. It's a good opportunity for us to reflect on the achievements and challenges in fully implementing that resolution. But as we've heard from all the fantastic briefers today and as the Executive Director of UN Women eloquently made clear, we must raise our ambition. We must commit to even more radical change and we need to ask ourselves, 20 years and 10 resolutions later, why is there still such a stark implementation gap when all the evidence suggests that incorporating gender perspective helps achieve sustainable peace and security? So I think, again, as the Executive Director of UN Women said, that's a question we need to ask ourselves all the time as we design any peace process or any international mechanism, project, programme; how can we make sure that we're living up to the full implementation of 1325? And this obviously means putting a particular focus on designing inclusive processes from the outset. Arms and territory shouldn't be the only reason that negotiators get a seat at the table. That's not right morally, it's not sensible economically, and it's not sensible and feasible if you want a just and a lasting peace settlement.

Madam Chairman, this year the UK funded the Gender Action for Peace and Security to deliver consultations with civil society in our nine National Action Plan focus countries and we did this because we wanted to better understand how we can identify and therefore, overcome those gaps. So we are taking concrete steps to promote and protect women peace builders and human rights defenders. We are providing sustainable multi-year funding and we're ensuring that we practice what we preach in terms of representation and policy.

As I look ahead to 2020, I hope we can have an effort right the way across the United Nations, not just in New York, but right across the whole UN system in the field and in the other headquarters buildings to focus efforts on full implementation of 1325. For our part, we will be particularly working on increasing women's meaningful participation in peace processes, notably in

Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen and the German Minister explained very eloquently what was happening in Afghanistan so I won't repeat that. In Yemen, the United Kingdom is funding a Gender Advisor and other senior inclusion positions within the US Special Envoy's Office so that we can build on his work to take forward women's participation in the peace process. In South Sudan, ahead of November's deadline for a transitional government, we are continuing to work with local women's groups to advocate for an inclusive process. And of course, with my very good friend and colleague, the Afghanistan PR, we have set up a women's group in New York, of which the US Ambassador is also part of, to take forward the participation of women in that very important peace process.

If I can turn to the UN, and again a number of our speakers mentioned the UN, the UN obviously has a huge role to play in implementing 1325. On the 19th anniversary, so with a year to go to do something about it, the United Kingdom would like to invite the UN to make progress in three particular areas. Firstly, to establish a strong formal working relationship with the Global Alliance of Women Mediators. This will ensure women mediators have access to key peace actors and are systematically considered for deployment as negotiators, mediators and advisors. Secondly, UN processes need to set the gold standard for inclusion and UN Special Envoy should be held to account on their commitments to implement 1325. And finally, ensuring UN-led peace processes are closely supported by gender experts to guarantee gender perspectives and this needs to be integrated throughout the mission. This is not a desirable, it's not a nice to have, it's an intrinsic part of any successful peace process.

In conclusion, Madam President, 2020 is not just about 1325. Next year marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing platform, the 70th anniversary of the UN, the fifth anniversary of youth peace and security, and ten years until the deadline to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. We cannot let this moment slip through our fingers. Now is the time to make progress on WPS in gender equality and the UN and the member states have a responsibility to deliver all of this next year.

Thank you.

[Team UK unveiled for Invictus Games in The Hague 2020](#)

This morning, the team of wounded, injured and sick (WIS) serving personnel and veterans were officially unveiled at the Honourable Artillery Company, London. They were joined by His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, Prince Harry, who posed with the competitors for the first official team photograph and wished them luck for the Games in May 2020.

The competitors, 89% of whom are new to Invictus, were also joined by the Minister for Defence People and Veterans, Johnny Mercer, service personnel from the Honourable Artillery Company and former Team UK captain, Mark 'Dot' Perkins.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I wish the best of luck to the team selected to represent the UK at the Invictus Games next year and look forward to following their journey from training camps to The Hague. The Invictus Games are a powerful reminder of the ability of sport to inspire and support the recovery of wounded, injured and sick serving personnel and veterans.

In July 2019, WIS personnel and veterans competed in nine sports over five days at the Invictus UK Trials hosted by Sheffield. Over 350 individuals applied for one of 65 places available on Team UK to represent their nation at the Invictus Games 2020.

The rigorous selection process for Team UK was based on the benefit the Invictus Games will give an individual as part of their recovery, combined with performance and commitment to training.

Hannah Lawton, Chef de Mission for Team UK, said:

The 65 men and women selected to represent Team UK will not only gain a personal recovery benefit from taking part in the Games but they will hopefully inspire others suffering with life-changing injuries or illnesses that anything is possible.

Our competitors are proudly serving their country again and showing that they will not let their injury or illness define them. As a team, we are especially proud of the fact that 89% of Team UK have never competed in the Invictus Games before.

We are very proud to be working alongside these 65 athletes and wish them the best of luck as they embark on their Invictus Games journeys.

This morning, Team UK also unveiled its first female captain, RAF veteran Rachel Williamson.

While playing for a RAF team, Rachel received a rugby injury, which developed into a functional neurological disorder, and she ultimately lost the ability to use her arm completely. She almost gave up on fitness forever. This year she will compete in Athletics, Indoor Rowing and Swimming. She said:

So far, my recovery journey has taken me from rock bottom to laying

down a new foundation, this year I aim to build the new me and take the final step to where I want to be. I've accepted my injury; learnt I can let my emotions go and not be embarrassed or afraid about asking for help.

Now it's time I raise the bar by trying new sports, being positive and happier with less excuses. The Invictus Games offers an amazing opportunity through sport to regain that sense of pride which can be lost following the onset of mental or physical disabilities.

Sport empowers us to refocus our attention on what we can do, rather than what we can't. To be selected as Team UK Captain is truly an honour and I feel immensely proud to be given this opportunity.

The team will compete in nine sports: Athletics, Archery, Cycling, Indoor Rowing, Powerlifting, Sitting Volleyball, Swimming, Wheelchair Basketball and Wheelchair Rugby. They will continue to train from now until May 2020 as part of Help for Heroes' extensive Sports Recovery programme and role to train and develop the team.

The Royal British Legion will be supporting the friends and family, including carers, of Team UK as part of its work to recognise the vital and valuable contribution that they make to the recovery of WIS service personnel and veterans.

The UK delegation to the Invictus Games The Hague is being delivered by a partnership comprising the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Help for Heroes, and The Royal British Legion.

[Government proposes enhanced protections for workers facing workplace discrimination](#)

- New proposals include consulting on whether employers should be required to provide references for former employees
- move would crack down on rogue employers using references as a bargaining chip, ensuring workers are better protected from threats or intimidation
- part of a wider package cracking down on misuse of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) and workplace discrimination announced in July

Employers could be stopped from withholding references to any employee under new proposals announced by Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom today (Tuesday

29 October). This would mean that employers could, for the first time, be required to provide at least a basic reference for any former employee.

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

I am determined to make the UK the best place to work and grow a business – including levelling the playing field between employees and employers. The overwhelming majority of businesses comply with the law, treating their employees with respect and fairness.

But we cannot tolerate the small minority that use nasty tactics like non-disclosure agreements and withholding references to pressure employees into silence, often in cases of serious wrongdoing. These proposals ensure individuals are protected, striking a fair balance between the interests of employers and workers.

These proposals form part of the government's response to an [inquiry on non-disclosure agreements](#) conducted by the Women and Equalities Select Committee (WESC).

Many of the recommendations made by the Committee were addressed in a raft of proposals announced in July to crack down on misuse of non-disclosure agreements, including legislation ensuring that confidentiality clauses cannot prevent individuals disclosing to the police, regulated health and care professionals or legal professionals.

Other recently proposed legislation includes:

- ensuring employers make clear the limitations of a confidentiality clause, in plain English, within a settlement agreement and in a written statement for an employee, so individuals signing them fully understand what they are signing and their rights
- extending current legislation so that individuals signing NDAs will get independent legal advice on the limitations of a confidentiality clause – including making clear that information can still be disclosed to police, regulated health and care professionals, or legal professionals regardless of an NDA
- introducing new enforcement measures to deal with confidentiality clauses that do not comply with legal requirements – for example, an NDA in a settlement agreement that does not follow new legislative requirements will be legally void

These plans reinforce the government's commitment to balance the needs of workers and businesses, delivering a UK labour market fit for the modern world of work.

Additional information

Government announced an [initial crackdown on NDAs](#) on 21 July 2019 – including proposals to:

- legislate so that no provision in a non-disclosure agreement can prevent disclosures to the police, regulated health and care professionals and legal professionals
 - legislate so that limitations in non-disclosure agreements are clearly set out in employment contracts and settlement agreements
 - produce guidance for solicitors and legal professionals responsible for drafting settlement agreements
 - legislate to enhance the independent legal advice received by individuals signing non-disclosure agreements
 - introduce enforcement measures for non-disclosure agreements that do not comply with legal requirements in written statements of employment particulars and settlement agreements
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Guatemala holds its own Business and Human Rights Forum

The aim of the activity was to discuss the role of the Guatemalan government as catalyst for business' respect for human rights.

The forum was a joint initiative by the European Union, Advocacy for Business and Human Rights (ABHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the British Embassy. Participants included; Anabella Sibrián, International Platform against Impunity; Lucrecia Hernández Mack, elect Congresswoman; Claudia Lavinia Figueroa, Secretary General at the Ombudsman Office; and Connie de Paiz, President of the Guatemalan Association of Exporters.

The panel discussion was held between civil society, public and private sector; and was an opportunity to promote a safe space to have a constructive dialogue and compare the challenges that all sectors face when implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The discussion flowed from sharing concerns, risks and possible solutions, to moving from a passive state to a preventive and active state.

Discussions also focused on the importance between corporations and indigenous communities' relations, the role of each sector in preventing conflict, conflict resolution, and suggestions for the incumbent government on how the country can move forward.

The organizers expressed their commitment to the promotion of the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights; and dialogue, to protect and guarantee human rights recognized in the international law. This endorsement included the support of businesses and the different key actors involved in fostering prosperity in Guatemala.

Barbara Amono-Oceng, Deputy Head of Mission for the British Embassy to

Guatemala, said:

We believe the UK's approach strikes an appropriate balance between encouraging strong corporate behaviour on human rights and avoiding an over-regulated approach, our aim is to encourage a race to the top and this is what we want to foster in Guatemala.

Stefano Gatto, European Union Ambassador to Guatemala, said:

There is no contradiction between well-understood human rights and the indispensable role of companies in promoting the economic development of a country. Dialogue is the fundamental tool that must prevail, with the aim of overcoming any obstacle with a view to the common good.

Odyssey Ltd

What started as a lightbulb moment in university transformed into a budding business for 23-year-old Dominic Bonaker, the CEO of Odyssey Ltd, an up-and-coming web design agency. After finishing his studies, Dominic launched his business in 2018 and has since spent the last 18 months transforming his business dreams into a reality.

Starting his young entrepreneurship journey

Dominic knew he wanted to be his own boss while studying for his Computer Software Engineering degree at Cardiff Metropolitan University. But his business journey did not quite take off as he expected. He soon realised that starting a business requires a bit more than just registering it with Companies House:

I set up my first company in my first year of university. I thought it just involved me saying 'Okay, I'm going start a company' and that was it and it was all sorted.

But that actually wasn't the case. There were certain requirements that I had to follow as a director of a company.

Launching a business can involve a lot of time and energy. As Dominic already had other commitments, he could not invest himself fully in the new venture. So, he decided to dissolve the company.

After a string of job interviews in his final year of study left him feeling underwhelmed about working for someone else, he decided to re-pursue the entrepreneurial career path. He launched his second company, Tech Tailors Ltd:

What began as Tech Tailors evolved into Odyssey Ltd. As the company gained momentum, it felt like it outgrew its original name, so I changed it with Companies House.

Odyssey was more of a fit because it means 'journey' and that's something we feel we do for clients – we take them on a journey from nowhere to a beautiful website.

Growing his business

Every business journey is different. In Dominic's case, he quickly realised that it was up to him to go out and find the networks and support he needed to make his business a success:

When I started out, it was pretty much just me. I didn't know about any of the available help from other organisations. When it came down to it, I had to go online and Google to see what networking events were coming up and what support was out there, and there's so much available that you don't come across on a day-to-day basis.

That's one thing that helped to boost Odyssey – me putting myself out there, meeting new people, seeing what kind of help I could get and going from there.

[Interview with Dominic Bonaker, founder and CEO of Odyssey](#)

Key challenges

Starting a business can come with multiple hurdles to jump, from finding the right office base to understanding the legal requirements and responsibilities expected of you as a company director. But one of the challenges Dominic faced was finding the capital to get things going:

When you're a start-up, you may have a lot of expenditure and don't have a lot of money coming in, and that was one thing that we did struggle with – but it's all scalable. You've just got to remember that you start with one project but then you put that money back into the business and pay yourself as little as possible.

That's exactly what I've done for the past year. You reinvest in the business.

Advice for budding young entrepreneurs

After spending time reinvesting funds earned into his business, the business started to grow. Not only has he become a successful young entrepreneur, but he's also taken up opportunities to encourage other aspiring business owners to take the plunge and start a business through his public speaking.

Although he wants to pass on as many learnings as he can to other young business owners, his top piece of advice remains simple:

My advice for any budding entrepreneur that's trying to get their foot into something is go out there and try something new. See what you can do and make happen, because you'll learn so much about yourself and so much about industry anyway. Just go out there and try it.