

Attorney General sworn in

News story

The Rt Hon Victoria Prentis MP has been sworn in as Attorney General following her appointment last month



The Rt Hon Victoria Prentis MP was sworn in as Attorney General for England and Wales and Advocate General for Northern Ireland at the Royal Courts of Justice today.

Speaking after the ceremony, the Attorney General the Rt Hon Victoria Prentis MP said:

I am honoured to be sworn in as Attorney General for England and Wales and Advocate General for Northern Ireland. As the Government's chief legal adviser, my focus will be upholding the rule of law and strengthening our justice system.

There are important responsibilities that come with this unique role which has been part of our constitution for centuries, and I look forward to working with the Solicitor General Michael Tomlinson MP to play my part in upholding the rule of law and carrying out the public interest functions of the Attorney General's Office.

Following the ceremony, the Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice Rt Hon Dominic Raab, said:

I congratulate Victoria as she takes on the vital and historic role of Attorney General.

Victoria's extensive background in law will strengthen the advice

provided to government on all legal matters, and I look forward to working together to support our justice system.

The Attorney General is the Government's chief legal advisor and also attends Cabinet. As well as providing advice to government, the Law Officers (the Attorney General and Solicitor General) oversee the Law Officers' Departments which include the Crown Prosecution Service, Serious Fraud Office, Government Legal Department and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate.

The Law Officers carry out a number of functions in the public interest, such as considering unduly lenient sentences and taking action when there has been a contempt of court. These functions are carried out independently of their role as government ministers.

The Rt Hon Victoria Prentis was appointed Attorney General on 25 October 2022.

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[Ukraine Defence Minister visits Defence team securing vital military aid](#)

Press release

Volodymyr Havrylov, Ukraine's Deputy Defence Minister, visited the UK today to see the support being provided to assist his country's armed forces.



The visit took place at MOD Abbey Wood near Bristol. Abbey Wood is the base of Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), the part of the MOD responsible for procuring much of the military support that the UK is sending to Ukraine.

The UK was the first European country to provide weapons to Ukraine and has so far provided over £2.3 billion worth of military aid, including hundreds of armoured vehicles, thousands of anti-tank weapons, and Multiple-Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) which have been able to strike targets on the battlefield with pinpoint accuracy.

While at Abbey Wood, the Minister saw the ongoing efforts to ensure the UK's support is aligned with Ukraine's requirements and military priorities.

Also today, Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey joined a call with counterparts from the US-led Ukraine Defense Contact Group (UDCG). The UDCG is made up of around 50 countries from around the world who discuss and pledge support for Ukraine in line with their requirements and needs.

Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey MP said:

The Ukrainian people have no closer friend in their heroic fight than the United Kingdom. The military aid we have provided so far has made a real difference on the battlefield. My continued engagement with Volodymyr and with international partners through organisations like the Ukraine Defense Contact Group have allowed us to support Ukraine's requirements for the coming winter and beyond.

Andy Start DE&S CEO said:

I'm immensely proud of the work the teams at DE&S have done to support our Ukrainian allies to date. This has been a huge team effort involving different parts of government, and companies right across our supply chain.

While in the UK, the Ukrainian Minister also visited the UK-led programme to train the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the UK, as well as discussions with UK industry partners.

It comes the week after the UK announced it was providing Ukraine with equipment to support its armed forces through [harsh winter conditions](#), as well as [1,000 more surface-to-air missiles](#) to counter threats to Ukrainian infrastructure.

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E3 statement to the IAEA Board of Governors on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, November 2022

Chair,

On behalf of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, I thank Director General Grossi for his latest report contained in GOV/2022/62, and Deputy Director General Aparo for his Technical Briefing. Once again, we commend the Agency for carrying out its mandate conferred by the United Nations Security Council – even given Iranian non-adherence with its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The E3 thank the Agency for its objective reporting of Iran's activities with regards to these commitments and encourage the Director General to keep the Board informed regarding the Iranian nuclear programme in all its aspects. We would welcome the Agency's last quarterly report on monitoring and verification in Iran to be made public.

The Director General very clearly reports that Iran is moving further and further away from its commitments agreed upon in 2015.

- Today, Iran's total enriched uranium stockpile exceeds JCPoA limits by 18 times and comprises very concerning amounts of uranium enriched up to 5, 20 and 60 percent.
- Since the Director General's last report as of September this year, Iran has increased its stockpile of uranium enriched up to 20 percent by 16 percent and its stockpile of uranium enriched up to 60 percent by 12 percent.
- There is no credible civilian justification for these activities which are inconsistent with Iran's JCPoA commitments for both enrichment levels and quantities of enriched material.

This situation will only worsen in the near future if Iran does not decide to return to full compliance with its commitments under the JCPoA. Iran has also drastically increased production of uranium enriched up to 5 percent, enabling Iran to produce even more HEU in the future. In his report, the Director General notes Iran has rapidly increased its enrichment capabilities through the testing and installation of additional IR-1 centrifuges as well as of advanced centrifuges. For example,

- At the underground location in Natanz, Iran has significantly increased the number of centrifuges producing uranium enriched up to 5 percent.
- More than half of Iran's advanced centrifuges at Natanz have been installed since the beginning of this year.
- Iran's knowledge gains from the operation of advanced centrifuges are irreversible.

In addition, the Director General once again emphasised in his report that Iran's decision to stop cooperating with the Agency with regards to monitoring and verification activities agreed in the JCPOA has seriously affected the Agency's knowledge of Iran's nuclear programme. Iran's decision to remove Agency surveillance and monitoring equipment has, as the Director General says, detrimental implications for the Agency's ability to provide assurance of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

Chair,

These steps present a very clear picture: Iran continues its unprecedented nuclear escalation. This raises serious doubts as to the nature of Iran's nuclear programme, which threatens regional and international security.

The E3, along with our partners, have done our utmost to negotiate a return to a reasonably restricted Iranian nuclear programme. After many months of negotiations, the JCPOA Coordinator tabled viable deals in March and again in August this year which would have returned Iran to full compliance with its JCPOA commitments and returned the US to the deal. Iran refused these packages with continued demands beyond the scope of the JCPOA, despite further efforts over the summer.

Chair,

The situation we are in is very dangerous. We urge Iran to immediately stop and reverse its nuclear escalation, allow for complete transparency with the IAEA by returning to full cooperation, and re-applying the Additional Protocol, as an important confidence-building step. We also recall that, under its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, Iran is legally obliged to implement Modified Code 3.1. and, according to international law, Iran cannot change its application or withdraw from it unilaterally.

Chair,

We will continue consultations, alongside international partners, on how best to address Iran's unabated and dangerous nuclear escalation. Thank you.

A57 Link Roads development consent decision announced

Press release

Today, 16 November 2022, the A57 Link Roads (previously known as Trans Pennine Upgrade Programme) application has been granted development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport



The A57 Link Roads project will include the creation of two new link roads: (1) Mottram Moor Link Road – a new dual carriageway from the M67 junction 4 roundabout to a new junction on the A57(T) at Mottram Moor; and (2) A57 Link Road – a new single carriageway link from the A57(T) at Mottram Moor to a new junction on the A57 in Woolley Bridge.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by National Highways on 28 June 2021 and accepted for Examination on 26 July 2021.

Following an Examination during which the public, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, recommendations were made to the Secretary of State on 16 August 2022.

This is the 120th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and 47th transport application to have been examined by The Planning Inspectorate within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Inspectorate's interim Chief Executive, Navees Rahman said:

“The Planning Inspectorate has now examined more than 100 nationally significant infrastructure projects since the Planning Act 2008 process was introduced, ensuring local communities, the local authority and other interested parties have had the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them.

“The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to all local views and the evidence gathered during the Examination before making its recommendation to the Secretary of State.”

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State for Transport and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation are publicly available on the project pages of the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

The [Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning

Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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Supporting a sustainable, collective response to challenges facing the Sahel

Thank you President, and I thank ASG Pobee, Executive Secretary Tiare, and to Mr Usman for their briefings.

President, the regional picture in the Sahel is stark. Countries are facing unprecedented challenges with escalating violence, rising humanitarian needs and famine-like conditions. As always, it is ordinary people who suffer the most. The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting the people of the Sahel – last year we contributed around \$355 million to the region.

However, if our collective response to these challenges is to be sustainable then the right conditions need to be in place.

Firstly, political will is needed to drive forward accountable governance, rule of law and justice. With three countries in the region now in the midst of political transitions, continued engagement with ECOWAS and the African Union is vital. We urge the Burkinabe, Chadian and Malian authorities to prepare for elections in open dialogue with civil society, including women and young people.

Second, effective counter-terrorism and respect for human rights must go hand in hand. To do otherwise risks aggravating grievances, undermining trust with local communities, and driving recruitment to terrorist groups. The harmful impact of Wagner Group operations on civilians in Mali and elsewhere on the continent is, by now, well documented. This is why Wagner will not succeed in Mali, and why they are not the right answer for any other country in the region.

We welcome the UN's efforts to build the G5 Sahel Joint Force's capacities for human rights compliance. But we urge the Joint Force to implement the mitigation measures identified under Human Rights Due Diligence assessments, as a condition of MINUSMA's support.

Finally, President, like others we look forward to the outcome of the Independent High Level Panel Strategic Assessment on the Sahel. We also look forward to the forthcoming discussions in the region on the Accra Initiative. Together these will help us to identify how best to work together to support

regional security.

The United Kingdom remains committed to helping address the Sahel's challenges through a holistic approach, with accountable governance and human rights at its heart. Thank you.