

Building the peace and stability that Central Africans deserve

Thank you Mr President, and also thank you to our briefers. I thought the briefings today were particularly insightful and clear.

Mr President, while it is good to hear that security has broadly improved in some areas over the past six months, I'd like to start by offering my condolences to the families of those killed in the attacks by members of the RRR group near Pahoua on 21 May. Violence such as this perpetrated by members of armed groups who signed the peace agreement demonstrates a flagrant disregard for the integrity of the peace process.

The United Kingdom fully supports the peace process in the Central African Republic just as we supported the African Union-led peace agreement on which it is founded. I again congratulate the African Union for their leadership and their ongoing work. It is vital that we all send our clear and unambiguous backing for a peace agreement and the peace process. With coordinated and sustained international support in particular from the region, the Central African Republic can achieve long lasting peace and stability. We call on all armed groups to cease all forms of violence and to engage in the implementation of the peace agreement.

We also reiterate the Secretary-General's call to reinforce local peace and reconciliation committees which offer agency to women members of civil society, religious leaders and youth. As we know Mr President from many conflicts in this chamber, an inclusive peace agreement is more likely to be a sustainable peace agreement. It is vital that the Central African people feel ownership for the peace agreement and its implementation. We need to see built a better understanding of the peace process, taking into account the views and needs of Central Africans.

Mr President, there can be no peace without justice. Incitement to violence including on religious and ethnic grounds and attacks on civilians peacekeepers and humanitarian workers will, I'm afraid, continue if perpetrators are not held to account. Accountability – again, as we've seen in so many conflicts – is vital if the people of the Central African Republic are to see peace and stability in their country.

The United Kingdom recognises the efforts by the government of the Central African Republic, together with MINUSCA and UNDP to bring some of the perpetrators of serious crimes to account. In particular we welcome the progress made in establishing the Special Criminal Court and initiating the first investigations. And we note that the court is conducting a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of its mandate. But more needs to be done. and we urge the Central African Republic to work with the international community to expedite progress on transitional justice – an essential component for peace and stability.

Mr President, more than one in four Central Africans are displaced and half of the population is in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. The United Kingdom is committed to supporting the humanitarian situation in CAR and has provided over \$140 million worth of funding since 2014 in this regard. However in 2018, only 36 per cent of the humanitarian response plan was funded. A stable secure and peaceful CAR remains in all of our interests and we encourage all member states to help fill the gap.

Mr President, the United Kingdom fully supports the work of minister and is committed to working with the Security Council in support of ministries stabilisation mandate. We support the Secretary-General's observation that there should be a renewed focus on the peace process with MINUSCA's participation and more responsibility taken by the guarantors and facilitators of the peace agreement. Enhanced UN political engagement will support political, peace building and security efforts in the Central African Republic. And I want to today pay tribute to all the work done by me by MINUSCA and send our thanks via the Special Representative to those who represent this Council in blue on the ground.

We also though need clear communications to the people of the Central African Republic to show them and help them understand how much MINUSCA is delivering to them. To conclude Mr President, the international community and their government the Central African Republic are making progress towards implementing key elements of the peace agreement. But there is much at stake; We must continue to focus on building peace, stability and create the conditions for safe and credible elections in 2020 which will help us get to the long term protection and prosperity that the people of CAR deserve.

Thank you Mr President.

[Mansion House dinner speech 2019 – Philip Hammond](#)

My Lord Mayor, Excellencies, Lords, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be back here, in the magnificent setting of the Mansion House.

At least, I think it's a magnificent setting; our Chinese guests on Monday thought it was a magnificent setting. But apparently Sir John Summerson, a prominent architectural historian, described it as "a striking reminder that good taste was not a universal attribute in the 18th century!"

Probably says more about architectural historians than it says about this building!

This evening, inevitably, has a slightly retrospective tinge to it: This will be Mark Carney's final Mansion House speech before at last being allowed to retire as Governor of the Bank of England (I've headed him off twice on his previous attempts!).

And I want to thank him, on behalf of everyone here, for his six years of superb leadership in that role. Mark, thank you for your service.

And for me, too, there is now just a hint of uncertainty as to what the future may hold. And that's a good enough excuse for a moment of self-indulgent retrospection.

But whatever my future is, I can promise you I won't be doing it from an overpriced garden shed on wheels!

The world has changed over the last nine years...

...but the values and beliefs that we applied to the challenges we inherited in 2010 endure...

...and are just as relevant to the ones we will face in 2020.

A belief in Britain as an open, tolerant, outward-looking nation at ease in the world.

A belief in the market economy as the best way to deliver prosperity for all our people – but a belief, too, that that model must evolve and adapt to a changing world.

A belief in the power of enterprise – that the true strength of our economy and society lies in the innovators, the entrepreneurs, and the self-starters who take risks and drive growth.

A belief in a pragmatic politics that is open to compromise and that deals with the world as it is, not as we might wish it to be.

[Political content removed]

That a paramount duty of Government is to ensure Britain's prosperity through the market economy and the prudent management of our public finances.

And that our four nations are more prosperous and successful when we act as one United Kingdom, working together towards common goals, based on the unique bond and shared values that have developed over centuries.

[Political content removed]

Nine years ago, I stepped into the Cabinet Room for the first time – part of a team that faced the daunting challenge of rebuilding our economy and our public finances after the shock of the 2008 crash.

We have made significant progress...

...but the journey has not been easy: of the 23 full members of today's

Cabinet, only three have served continuously since May 2010.

It is taking years for the full impacts of the crash to be felt.

So, while it is true that, ten years on...

... the economy has recovered...

...and we have fixed the public finances...

... some of the tensions that were exposed by the crash and its aftermath contributed to the Referendum shock in 2016 and the drift away from “politics-as-usual” since then.

In short, while we have repaired the public finances and re-booted our economy, we have not yet repaired our society and our politics.

My approach to Brexit has been shaped by the simple observation that no one, however passionate their views on Europe, voted to be poorer – so a successful Brexit in the eyes of the electorate must be a Brexit that protects Jobs, Businesses and living standards.

So, the next Prime Minister will need to complete the post-crash recovery process...

...by rebuilding confidence in our democratic politics and our market economy...

...demonstrating that it is capable of delivering an economy that works for everyone...

...where competition delivers for consumers...

...where businesses are sustainable and reflect the values of the next generation...

...and where productivity-enhancing technology delivers better jobs and real wage rises for workers...

...as well as profits for investors.

[Political content removed]

But I am an eternal optimist – so I reiterate that call tonight.

Because it doesn't mean that there would be no extra money to spend.

As I said at the Spring Statement, if we leave the EU in a smooth and orderly way, the fiscal headroom I have built up means an incoming Prime Minister will have scope for additional spending or tax cuts.

But there is a caveat: a damaging ‘No Deal’ Brexit would cause short-term disruption to our economy, soaking-up all the fiscal headroom we have built, and more...

...and while fiscal and monetary policy interventions could help to smooth our path to a post-No Deal Brexit economy, both could only be temporary...

...and neither could prevent the economy being permanently smaller, than if we leave with a Deal.

So, there is a choice: either we leave with No Deal...

...or we preserve our future fiscal space – we cannot do both.

The truth is, despite my somewhat hawkish reputation, I signalled in 2016 a more balanced approach, recognising the need to invest in our future, support our public services and keep taxes down – as well as controlling the deficit and starting to reduce the debt.

As the public finances have improved, I have committed over £150bn of new spending in the last 3 years...

...including an NHS settlement which is the single largest commitment ever made by a peacetime British Government.

Public capital investment is set to reach the highest sustained level in forty years...

...as we build the critical national infrastructure we need to raise our productivity;

I've committed £44bn to housing, delivering more new homes last year than in all but one of the last 30 years;

And I've cut taxes, with over 30 million people seeing their income tax cut this year;

288,000 people benefitting so far from the abolition of stamp duty for first time buyers;

And British businesses paying the lowest corporation tax rate in the G20.

All while seeing our national debt falling sustainably for the first time in a generation...

...and the employment rate at a record high and unemployment at a 40-year low.

[Political content removed]

Yet one thing is clear: whatever happens with Brexit, financial services will remain one of our largest and most important industries.

Ten years on from the crisis, and in the midst of the Brexit debate, we need to articulate a vision for the future of our Financial Services industry and a plan for delivering it that will boost London's position as the world's leading international financial centre.

This sector has travelled a long way since the crisis, with wholesale reform

of prudential and conduct regulation; higher capital requirements; and more robust resolution regimes.

But now it is overshadowed by Brexit.

We know that we must resolve our future relationship with the EU for our FS businesses to thrive.

The financial services industry was the first to make the case for a transition period...

...and it was the first to move, decisively, to prepare for the risk of “No Deal”.

Government has responded – through our temporary permission regimes; the technical dialogues between the Bank of England and the ECB; and the onshoring of EU regulation.

And the Political Declaration jointly committed to an outline future FS relationship which avoids falling back on existing, largely untested, equivalence regimes.

But, important as Brexit is, it is a short-term challenge – and we cannot allow it to distract our gaze from the structural changes that will shape the future.

The single market did not create the city of London.

As I said here last year, the balance of the UK’s FS trade will inevitably shift, as we continue to do business with the EU, but with future growth increasingly coming from the dynamic emerging markets beyond Europe.

London’s position as the premier global financial services hub depends on our ability to capture a share of these booming markets.

And it depends, too, on our ability to integrate the technologies of the future into our mainstream financial services.

In short, to remain a dominant player we in the UK must do what London’s markets have always done: evolve. Refuse to stand still; reject the notion of the status quo; embrace change, disruption and challenge. Adopt, adapt and synergise enthusiastically and energetically. Radiate the energy and dynamism which distinguishes a real hub of innovation from its sterile imitators.

And we have a plan to do so, building on our long traditions of innovation, resilience, agility and openness to create a platform for the future.

We are seeing, all around us, unprecedented FS innovation.

As new businesses dismantle distribution chains, create new ways to serve the market, and meet demands that did not even exist a few short months ago.

The UK’s Pro-business policies and the most innovative regulatory environment

in the world have created the conditions for innovators and disruptors to thrive.

But as the first wave of FinTech innovation matures, we must now evolve our policy and regulation too, to make sure it remains fit for purpose.

So, I can announce this evening a Treasury-led review of the payments landscape bringing together policymakers and regulators to make sure that our regulation and infrastructure keeps pace with the dizzying array of new payments models.

And we will use the Government's "Smart Data Function", working with the FCA and Treasury, to build on the fantastic success of our Open Banking initiative with a new agenda for Open Finance – giving small businesses, as well as consumers, power over all of their financial data, so that SMEs will have access to financial tools hitherto only accessible to larger corporates.

At the same time, we must maintain our reputation not only as one of the most dynamic and innovative places to do business – but one of the most resilient too.

So the second step in our plan is to launch a major, long-term review into the future of our regulatory framework.

This review will deliver a regulatory system that continues to enable, rather than stifle, innovation...

...that protects consumers...

...maintains the highest possible standards...

...is proportionate and policed by independent regulators...

...and that recognises that the EU will continue to be one of our major trading partners...

...even as it lays the groundwork for the more global nature of our future financial services industry.

I have heard the message from business that there is a critical need for greater "air traffic control" to manage the cumulative impact of regulatory change emanating from different sources.

So, as we wait for the future relationship with the EU to be clear, the first phase of this review will take action to improve coordination between the regulatory authorities – starting with a summit of all the relevant regulators at No11 in a few weeks' time, leading to a Treasury call for evidence before the summer.

We recognise that global challenges need a global response.

So, we will maintain our ambition to be the most open and outward-facing financial services market in the world.

Last year, I set out our plans for Global Financial Partnerships;

On Monday, I launched the new London-Shanghai Stock Connect – and Huatai, the first issuer, raised US\$1.54 billion, showing the phenomenal potential of this kind of cross-listing mechanism;

And tonight, I can announce the issuance of a second Sovereign Sukuk by the UK.

As well as openness to new business channels – we must also be open to international talent.

We're embarked on an unprecedented year-long consultation on the post-Brexit migration regime, and I urge this industry to use this opportunity to make the case for a regime that meets the needs of its businesses.

And we're shoring up our domestic skills regime too – and I welcome the interim report, published today, of the FS Skills Taskforce, ably led by Mark Hoban and CityUK.

Openness also means showing leadership on a global scale, as we use our deep capital markets and FS expertise to help meet the great strategic challenges of the 21st century.

As a first step, we've launched the new Impact Investment Institute, aiming to channel more money towards social challenges, as well as seeking a financial return.

The financial services sector will play a critical role in addressing the challenges of ageing populations.

But the biggest challenge of all will be mobilising financial markets in support of this Government's commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The people in this room, and the institutions you represent, will be key to that effort...

...as we show that the immense power of this industry can be harnessed as a force for good; a key part of the solution to the world's problems.

As I contemplate the past nine years, there is much that we can be proud of. We defied the doom-mongers: Our economy and our public finances have been painstakingly rebuilt; our banking system has been recapitalised and made safe; our employment levels are at a record high, with wages, too, now growing sustainably.

But our politics is not in such good shape.

As we look ahead to a new set of challenges today it would be easy to be despondent about the divisions in our country.

But those divisions will heal...

...and as we look to the future, there is much about our country to inspire us.

Our institutions are strong and enduring;

Our legal system and our language dominate the world's commerce;

Our great universities and research institutes are generating world-beating IP;

Our entrepreneurs, our innovators, and our creators continue to punch way above our weight.

And in many of the cutting-edge technologies of tomorrow, world-class British companies lead the way.

[Political content removed]

We can look ahead to a brighter future for our economy, our politics, our society and our country.

Financial services – one of Britain's biggest industries...

...but also a critical enabler for change...

...has a vital role to play.

I know you will rise to the challenge.

And I wish you all, all the very best for the future.

Thank you.

Middle East Peace Process: Call to reduce the risk of violence

Thank you Mr President. Before I start on the Middle East, could I just say how sorry we were about the terrorist attack on 16 June in Nigeria near Maiduguri which killed at least 30 people. And I think the Council press statement has just issued on that, which is welcome. But our sympathies and condolences to those affected and to Nigeria.

Turning to the Middle East, Mr President. Thank you Mr Mladenov for your briefing. I think some common themes are emerging. For the United Kingdom, we share the Secretary-General's views on the expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem. It was disappointing that on 30 May the Israeli authorities published tenders for the construction of over 500 settlement units in East Jerusalem. And that's a decision that we

condemn Mr President.

As others have pointed out the continued escalation of settlement activity in the West Bank and East Jerusalem is contrary to international law as reaffirmed by Resolution 2334. An annexation of any part of the West Bank would also be contrary to international law – not to mention destructive to peace efforts. And I just wanted to set that out clearly.

Turning to Gaza, the United Kingdom condemns the rocket attack by Palestinian militants against southern Israel on 13 June. We strongly condemn all acts of terrorism and we call upon Hamas and other terrorist groups to put a permanent end to their incitement and rocket fire against Israel. We were saddened by reports of a Palestinian medic who succumbed to wounds received last month – when he was hit in the face by a rubber coated bullet at the Gaza periphery. It's very hard to comprehend, Mr President, the killing of those delivering medical services.

So we'd like to take this opportunity once more to urge all parties concerned to take action to reduce the risk of violence and to make renewed progress towards a long term agreement. It is only through a long term political solution, bringing the Palestinian Authority back to Gaza that communities in Israel and Gaza can be free from the threat of violence.

In response to the fragile humanitarian situation, on 29 May the United Kingdom announced a \$2 million package of support for the World Health Organisation. This is to help address the gap in trauma and emergency care in Gaza and will help establish a new limb reconstruction unit. We hope that this package of support will relieve the pressure on Gaza's hard-pressed health services.

I want to turn if I may to the altercations on Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount on 2 June. Given the religious importance and the political sensitivity of the holy sites, we look to all parties to maintain the status quo and engage in dialogue to assume a calm, especially during religious observances such as the holy month of Ramadan.

Turning to a solution to the conflict, Mr President, along with other member states the United Kingdom continues to promote a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions. It is our understanding and it seems that the understanding is shared by most Council members that sustainable peace requires: a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state, based on 1967 borders with agreed land swaps with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states and a just, fair, agreed and realistic settlement for refugees. There need to be security arrangements, that for Israelis: prevent any resurgence of terrorism and for Palestinians: respect the sovereignty ensure freedom of movement and demonstrate that the occupation is over. To this end, Mr President I'd like to take the opportunity to encourage our US colleagues to bring forward detailed proposals for a viable Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement that addresses the legitimate concerns of both parties. We continue to believe that the only way to achieve this is through substantive peace talks leading to a two-state solution.

Mr President there will be a meeting in Bahrain next week about the economic situation and proposals. This is welcome. More needs to be done to enable the Palestinians to trade freely with the rest of the world. This in turn requires greater movement of goods and people and the easing of Israeli restrictions. Ultimately in order for the Palestinian economy to flourish, a political solution to the conflict needs to be found.

Lastly, Mr President, others have mentioned UNWRA. And I would like to reiterate that the United Kingdom also remains a committed supporter of UNWRA and of Palestinian refugees across the Middle East. We welcome UNWRA's efforts to broaden its donor base. And I'd like to encourage others to step up with more funding and more predictable disbursements. In this context, Mr President, we look forward to a successful pledging conference here in New York next week.

Thank you.

[Syria: A situation that is accelerating and it's exponential](#)

Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you to both Under-Secretary's-General for that briefing. And through you, can I also pay tribute and thank all UN personnel on the ground in Syria and neighbouring countries, all humanitarian workers who are risking their lives to try and make the situation better for the ordinary people of Idlib and of Syria.

Mr President, I agree very much with a lot of what my colleagues have said today so I won't repeat it. Thank you to you, Germany and Belgium, for insisting on this session which is much needed. I won't go into the political process because the French Ambassador has said everything I would have said. So on this occasion he speaks for the United Kingdom also.

I wanted to start, if I may, with the situation against the Turkish observation posts and personnel in Idlib. They have been targeted by Syrian Regime shelling. I look forward to what our Turkish colleague can tell us later about that. But I just want to recall that Turkey has been one of the countries trying to help resolve the situation in Idlib. And the reward they get for that is to have their personnel fired upon. That's not just a sad commentary, Mr President, on the state of affairs in Syria, it's an absolute inversion of Member States' responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. And as the Under-Secretary General said, the damage that is being done to Idlib and its civilians far outstrips any degradation or necessity in respect of terrorist forces like HTS and I think she referred to a pointless stalemate and that's exactly what it is, Mr President. People are being killed but no advantage is being gained at all militarily. And other speakers have drawn attention to the fact that there is

no military solution. I agree very much with my American colleague on that. So, along with the Polish representative, I want to call this out as a clear violation of the Sochi Agreement and to call for all parties to respect that Agreement and go back to the ceasefire. In fact, I have to say Mr President I find it incredible. President Putin agreed the Sochi agreement with President Erdogan. Why, therefore the Russian Federation cannot persuade the Syrian authorities to follow it – it's a mystery to all of us. But again it's an inversion of what ought to be happening. And I hope that when Special Envoy Lavrentiev and Deputy Foreign Minister Vershinin go to Syria this week, they will be able to press the Syrian authorities on this. And they will be able to have success.

Like other speakers, Mr President, I'd like to turn also to the situation against IHL and the situation of the bombing of the hospitals. This is a situation that is accelerating and it's exponential. And I look forward to what OCHA can tell us next week after their briefing. But in the meantime I'd like to hear some answers from the Russian and the Syrian Representatives here today. And I keep asking these questions, Mr President. I keep not getting answers but I'm going to carry on asking them because they're absolutely critical. And if people believe, as we'll hear later today, from both Representatives that they want to resolve this conflict – then they do need to begin to address these questions. So my first question is: are the attacks on hospitals deliberate? If they are deliberate, then I would be grateful for an explanation as to how such attacks meet the IHL core principles of distinction, necessity and proportionality.

And I'd also be grateful, Mr President, to know why no warning was given to the hospitals? Because under Article 19 of the Fourth Geneva Convention – the protection to which civilian hospitals are entitled shall not cease unless they used [outside their humanitarian duties] to commit acts harmful to the enemy. But the critical clause is: protection however may cease only after due warning has been given. Naming [in all appropriate cases] a reasonable time limit [and after such warning has remained unheeded]. So I would like to know, Mr President, if those warnings were given and if time limits were set and if not, why not? If, on the other hand the attacks on the hospitals are not deliberate, what steps are being taken by the Syrian and Russian authorities to avoid such attacks in future? What are the weaknesses in their deconfliction systems that are allowing the attacks to happen?

And my last question, Mr President, would be please can we know which units from both the Syrian military and the Russian military are involved in these attacks? I think that would be a very helpful piece of transparency for the Council to have. We, for the UK's part, will continue to provide significant humanitarian assistance to help keep people alive. But there's no doubt that restoring a ceasefire and ensuring that all parties respect it is actually the critical thing that needs to happen. And that is the thing, not the humanitarian assistance, that will make the biggest difference to the people in Idlib.

Two points on looking ahead, Mr President. I very much share what the French Representative said about reconstruction and elections. We provide humanitarian assistance. We will not provide reconstruction assistance. We

will not be able to contribute to the eventual rehabilitation of Syria into the world community of nations – without a viable and meaningful and sustainable political process. And my last point, Mr President, again like France, will be to reiterate that if chemical weapons are used again against the civilians in Syria, we will join our colleagues in responding swiftly and appropriately.

Thank you.

Right of Reply by Mark Power, First Secretary, at the Security Council briefing on the situation in Idlib, Syria

Thank you Mr President. My Ambassador has just asked me to take the floor – and she apologises that she had to leave the meeting – just to make a couple of final points on the substance of the issue today as opposed to some of the extraneous points that were brought in by some of the speakers. And those were going back to the strikes on the hospitals.

The Russian Ambassador asked us a question which was what the difference was between the hospitals that were attacked in the Syrian Government-controlled territory versus those that were attacked in rebel-held territory. And the difference is that in Idlib in the rebel-held territory, the Russians were supplied with the information about those medical facilities through the deconstruction mechanism we have been discussing today.

So the question remains – as was asked by my Ambassador – how it comes about that those hospitals and medical facilities have found themselves under attack – remains a legitimate one. And we further find it slightly astonishing that the Russian Ambassador was surprised that the number of hospitals had increased? During a civil war we think that this is a natural consequence of the attacks that have been taking place on civilians and therefore the reason why the mechanism was created in the first place. So to reiterate the point: we will answer our questions but will they answer questions that we have posed to them.

Thank you.

Landmark resolution on Persons with Disabilities in Armed Conflict

Thank you, Mr President. As co-penholder the United Kingdom would like to echo the words of the Polish Representative, Ambassador Joanna, and thank Council members for their constructive and thoughtful contributions during the negotiation process. The UK would like to express special thanks to the Polish delegation for their commitment in this joint endeavour. Poland's initiative last year to host the Arria Formula meeting on the issue has

proven to be decisive in focusing the collective attention of this Council.

I also thank Russia and China for voting for this Resolution despite the doubts they expressed today. I agree with my Russian colleague and friend that we shouldn't be creating new legal obligations and we've been careful not to do so. And we agree that all citizens and civilians should be protected and we also agree that this should not just be declaratory and that there should be concrete actions and indeed there are in this Resolution.

Mr President, empowering people with disabilities leads to better decisions and more effective outcomes for communities, for nations and for the world. This Resolution is a vital first step in the Council's role in mitigating and better understanding the disproportionate impact that conflict has on persons with disabilities.

As we heard from the inspirational Syrian Nujeen Mustafa earlier this year, active participation is essential to improving the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict as well as in humanitarian response plans and post-conflict recovery. This Resolution offers a clear statement that persons with disabilities want to, can and must participate and lead decisions which affect their lives. It recognises the protection needs of all affected civilian populations and calls for safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access to all people in need of assistance.

We look forward to increased information and recommendations from the Secretary-General in both thematic and geographic Security Council reports. Along with the inclusion of data disaggregated by disability, this will further improve the evidence-based approach that we want all to take to the Council's decision making.

Mr President, this landmark Resolution is recognition that there should be nothing about us, without us and we hope that the actions agreed start the process of answering that call.

Thank you Mr President.