

[Press release: UK and Canada joint statement on Hong Kong](#)

Joint statement by Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland:

We have been following the proposals of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance. It is clear that the proposals have generated significant debate in Hong Kong, in particular in relation to removing the territorial restrictions on extradition to mainland China.

We are concerned about the potential effect of these proposals on the large number of UK and Canadian citizens in Hong Kong, on business confidence and on Hong Kong's international reputation. Furthermore, we believe that there is a risk that the proposals could impact negatively on the rights and freedoms set down in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. It is vital that extradition arrangements in Hong Kong are in line with 'One Country, Two Systems' and fully respect Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy. We have made these views clear in our respective conversations with the Hong Kong Government.

It is important that these proposals are subject to the highest levels of scrutiny, including in the Legislative Council. We urge the Hong Kong Government to engage meaningfully with Hong Kong's broad range of local and international stakeholders in order to ensure their concerns are fully considered. We believe that the Hong Kong Government should allow time to give proper consideration of all alternative options and safeguards.

[News story: Blackpool Tower rides again](#)

The vintage 'Class 37' loco' (37407) first carried the name back in the 1990s, when it became part of a fleet of locomotives running 'seaside specials' taking thousands of holiday makers and day trippers from Manchester Victoria Station to the seaside town known as the 'Las Vegas of the North'.

Paul Makepeace, Head of Delivery at DRS, attended the naming ceremony and spoke about the honour of being invited to celebrate the 125th birthday of the iconic structure.

Blackpool tower has a special place in the heart of everyone from the North of England, and we're delighted to be involved in these celebrations. It means a lot to everyone at DRS – especially those based in Carlisle who have many happy memories of their holidays and days out in Blackpool.

We've all played 'first one to spot Blackpool Tower wins 50 pence' when travelling to the seaside... now people up and down the country can join in the game when they see 37407 working across the UK.

Rail enthusiasts will be delighted to know that 37407 is one of several DRS locomotives that has been re-painted in the distinctive yellow and blue British Rail 'large logo' livery.

The locomotive will continue operating on the national rail network working on a range of DRS services, from freight and passenger services through to supporting the work to decommission and clean up the UK's earliest nuclear sites.

Press release: Prime Minister appoints new Grenfell Tower Inquiry panel members

The Prime Minister has today (30 May) confirmed the appointment of Professor Nabeel Hamdi and Thouria Istephan to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry panel for Phase 2 of its work.

Professor Hamdi, an accomplished academic with an international reputation in housing and participatory design and planning, and Ms Istephan, a widely respected partner at Foster + Partners architectural practice, will join the Inquiry panel for Phase 2.

On the appointments, the Prime Minister said:

I am confident these new appointments will ensure the Inquiry panel has the diversity of skills and experience necessary for the scope and complexity of issues to be investigated by Phase 2 of the Inquiry's work.

This will help get to the truth of what happened, deliver justice and ensure that a tragedy like the fire in Grenfell Tower can never happen again.

The exchange of letters between the Prime Minister and the Inquiry Chair about the appointments can be found [here](#).

Notes to editors:

1. Nabeel Hamdi is currently Professor Emeritus of Housing and Urban Development at the School of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University. Nabeel qualified at the Architectural Association in London in 1968. He worked for the Greater London Council between 1969 and 1978, where his award-winning housing projects established his reputation in participatory design and planning. From 1981 to 1990 he was Associate Professor of Housing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 1997 Nabeel won the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour for his work on Community Action Planning. He founded the Masters Course in Development Practice at Oxford Brookes University in 1992, which was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education in 2001. Nabeel has consulted on housing, participatory action planning and upgrading of slums in cities to all major international development agencies, and to charities and NGOs worldwide.
2. Thouria Istephan is partner and Construction Design Management (CDM) Manager at Foster + Partners, with responsibility for the application of Construction (Design and Management) Regulations – strategically and operationally – as well as global health and safety compliance. She is also the Technical Design Deputy of the practice's Construction Review Group, advising on buildability. Thouria worked for several UK architectural practices before joining the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as an HM Inspector of Health and Safety, then acting as advisor on Construction (Design and Management) Regulations. Thouria joined Foster + Partners in June 1997. She was made a partner in 2007 and Technical Design Deputy in 2015. Her knowledge and experience of safety standards and the regulatory environment has direct relevance to the issues to be considered by Phase 2 of the Inquiry's work.
3. Further information about the work of the Inquiry can be found [here](#).

[News story: EU Nationals and Student Finance in England](#)

The following statement applies to EU nationals who currently receive student loans and/or grants from Student Finance England (SFE), and to EU nationals applying to start courses in England in the 2020/21 Academic Year.

Under current student finance rules in England, EU nationals (including relevant family members) must meet the following requirements.

For tuition fee loans, EU nationals must be ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland for the three years prior to the start of their course. The purpose of that three year residency should not have been mainly for the purpose of receiving full time education. For maintenance support, EU nationals must be ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the five years prior to the start of their course. Where the period of ordinary five year residency was mainly for the purpose of receiving full time education, the student must have previously been ordinarily resident in the EEA/Switzerland. EU nationals are also currently eligible for home fee status, meaning they must be charged the same tuition fees at publicly funded institutions as domestic students in England.

Current students including those that will start courses in the 2019/20 academic year or before

EU nationals (or their family members) currently in higher or further education or starting in the 2019/20 academic year, and who are eligible to receive loans and/or grants from Student Finance England will continue to remain eligible for these loans and grants until they finish their course (even if the course ends after the UK has left the EU).

EEA/EFTA and Swiss nationals

EEA/EFTA and Swiss nationals (and their family members) who are migrant or frontier workers or self-employed in the UK can access tuition fee loans, maintenance support and home-fee status on the basis of three years residence in the EEA/Switzerland immediately prior to the start of their course. Children of Swiss nationals will remain eligible for support on the same basis as now.

[News story: Call for evidence: Use of interpreters in the asylum process](#)

In my 2019-20 [inspection plan](#) I signalled my intention to carry out an inspection of the asylum system as a whole in the latter part of 2019. In advance of this, I planned to examine some discrete elements of the system, and I am now ready to begin an inspection of the Home Office's use of interpreters in the asylum process. I am inviting bodies with relevant knowledge and expertise, including NGOs, academics, think tanks, faith groups and representative bodies, to write to me by 13 June 2019 with their supporting evidence or case studies they are able to share.

I would also like to receive evidence from individuals, including those who have first-hand experience of the asylum process and have used interpreters during it.

Please note that my remit does not extend to investigating or making decisions about individual cases. This remains a Home Office responsibility.

Please note that submissions may be cited in the final report.