

Speech: Reconstruction, reconciliation and representation as the keys to progress in Iraq

Thank you, Mr. President. Let me begin by thanking Special Representative Hennis-Plasschaert for your very thoughtful and comprehensive briefing. I think today's unanimous adoption of the resolution renewing UNAMI's mandate shows the strong Council support for your work and for the work of your mission.

Mr President, I think it's significant that this is our first Council meeting on Iraq since the liberation of the last of Daesh-held territory in the region. And whilst as a Security Council I think it's only natural that at times we tend to focus on the risks and the threats, I do think it's very important that we also reflect on the significant progress that's been made in Iraq to date and also that we thank the Iraqi government, the Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi people for the immense sacrifices that they have made in defeating Daesh.

Now, whilst the territorial defeat is a very important milestone, the path to reconciliation and stabilisation will be long and complex. Erasing the ideology of Daesh will take time and will require our sustained and collective efforts. In this regard, we recognise the important role that UNAMI continues to play in supporting the government of Iraq and its post-conflict recovery and stabilisation efforts.

Looking ahead, the immediate focus must be on ensuring that the conditions that first gave rise to Daesh do not re-emerge again. In the near term, we believe this means focusing on three areas: reconstruction, reconciliation and representation.

First, on reconstruction and the provision of basic services, these are clearly essential for Iraq's long term stability. We've all heard the staggering figures mentioned today by Cote d'Ivoire with over 1.75 million Iraqis remaining displaced, unable or unwilling to return to their homes. The governments of Iraq, the UN and the international community should continue to work urgently to address this situation, including by recognising and tackling underlying concerns and through the full implementation of the pledges made at the Kuwait conference on reconstruction, referred to earlier by the Russian Ambassador. Ensuring that all Iraqi citizens are able to access civil documentation must also be a priority, especially for internally displaced children who face disruption to their education.

Underpinning all of this is the need for strong state institutions, an inclusive and representative government. In this regard, we support Prime Minister Abdul Mahdi's efforts to reach agreement in the Council of Representatives to fill the remaining four cabinet positions and to ensure the broadest possible representation of women and minorities in all levels of

government.

Mr President, second, as Iraq continues to rebuild following years of conflict, reconciliation at all levels of society must be front and centre – a point raised by the French Ambassador. In this regard we welcome UNAMI's continued engagement with the government of Iraq as it advances an inclusive political dialogue. We further welcome the important role that the UN plays in supporting an effective and accountable Iraqi security sector – one that is able to effectively counter the ongoing threat from Daesh and provide security for all Iraqis.

Accountability is important, too, as Germany highlighted, and we thank the government of Iraq and the UN Mission for their ongoing support to the UN investigative team for accountability for Daesh crimes as it continues to carry out its vital work to ensure justice for survivors.

Mr President, third, turning finally to representation, the United Kingdom welcomes the UN mission's focus on gender across all of its activities, including its work to promote the enactment of the anti-domestic violence law. We strongly agree with Germany that women's protection and meaningful participation will support reconciliation and long term stability. As we are approaching the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325 next October, we will continue to support Iraq to ensure that its next National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security is budgeted, implemented in collaboration with civil society and coordinated at the local and national level. We would also welcome the opportunity to hear from more female civil society briefers as in future Council meetings to learn from their experiences and expertise.

Mr President, the United Kingdom remains steadfast in our commitment to and our support for the important work of UNAMI and for the people of Iraq as they work to build a more stable and prosperous future.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[Speech: Ending bloodshed in Libya](#)

Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you to Mr Salamé and Mr Chergui for your briefings and to the German ambassador for his report of the Sanctions Committee. We're very grateful that the SRSG could be here in New York. That was very sobering and quite an alarming briefing and we take very seriously, Mr President, the warnings that you have given.

I wanted to set out three clear things right at the start, if I may, so that there can be no ambiguity.

First of all, in response to Mr Salamé's appeal to the parties on the ground and his request for a very firm message from the Council, I wanted to do the

following, Mr President:

I wanted to express the United Kingdom's very firm support for Mr Salamé and the UN-led process as the only way ultimately to achieve the security and stability that all Libyans deserve.

Secondly, we are extremely clear in our call which I repeat today for all those involved in the conflict to commit to an immediate ceasefire, unfettered humanitarian access and a resumption of political talks facilitated by Mr Salamé.

I would like to really stress those points and I invite, Mr President, all Council members to do likewise so there's no doubt about the strength of feeling on the Council on these issues and the importance of unity in the Council.

We're very concerned, as the briefings – including from the African Union – implied, that the security and humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. As I say, this is alarming. There can be no military solution and there certainly won't be anything like a clean victory for any party in Libya. The protracted and worsening violence as the SRSR said, it certainly doesn't benefit ordinary people in Libya. And we really need to put them front and centre of what we're doing.

Mr President, I'd like to turn to the arms embargo. All Member States have an obligation under SCR 1970. We know or we heard earlier that ships even now may be on their way to Libyan ports with arms. Flooding Libya with arms is only going to fuel escalation and it's only going to prolong the conflict and it's only going to retard progress towards a ceasefire. So we really do call on all Member States to implement that arms embargo in full and we hope Libya Sanctions Committee will continue to do its good work at looking at transgressions of that arms embargo.

And I think we also need to remember, Mr President that Daesh and other extremist groups are capitalising on the chaos in Libya to carry out opportunistic attacks. That ought to worry all of us. It particularly worries those of us who are at direct risk from Daesh-inspired terrorism. Continued fighting will continue to have a negative impact on the counter-terrorism agenda in Libya. And we need to keep in mind that the people who benefit most from this conflict are actually these extremist groups. And that's another sobering point that we all ought to reflect on.

I wanted, if I may, to say a few words about humanitarian and oil. There have been reports of targeting of civilians. I want to urgently call on all parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and to ensure that civilians, civilian infrastructure and medical personnel facilities and transports are protected. I want to underscore the obligations in Resolution 2286 about not targeting health workers and detention centres. I want to stress the need for the greatest possible humanitarian access on the ground.

The Special Representative mentioned the oil situation. Mr President, we

believe it's essential that all Libya's exports – oil exports – remain under the supervision of the National Oil Corporation of Tripoli in accordance with this Council's resolutions and any attempt by the parties to the conflict to divert Libya's oil resources for their own ends again needs to be addressed by the Libya Sanctions Committee.

We heard a little bit about Mr Kartas from the German representative. We have supported the UN in this; we continue to support the UN. We have heard reports of his safe release, but I would like to underscore, Mr President that UN personnel carry immunity. They work for the United Nations. The United Nations works for the benefit of all citizens in those countries where it is situated and we really do call on Member States to respect that.

So if I may conclude, the safety of UN personnel in general is of great concern to us. A cease fire and a return to the UN-led political process. The only way to end the bloodshed in Libya and the only way to chart a way forward before the situation collapses into an even more deadly and chaotic conflict.

As penholder Mr President, we will continue to engage Council members on a way forward and the appropriate steps that this Council can take in support of the SRSG.

Thank you very much.

Press release: Minister for Europe accompanies Their Royal Highnesses on a visit to Ireland

Foreign Office Minister Sir Alan Duncan joined Their Royal Highnesses, The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall, on a visit to Ireland in celebration of the longstanding friendship between the two Nations.

During the two-day visit, the Minister joined Their Royal Highnesses at the Glenree Peace and Reconciliation Centre, which was founded in 1974 and works with former combatants, victims and survivors, faith groups and women. At the centre, the Minister joined Their Royal Highnesses in hearing about the centre's Women's Programme, designed to promote and enhance Irish women's understanding of strong and peaceful Irish society.

The Minister also accompanied Their Royal Highnesses at a civic reception at the historical Powerscourt House and Gardens in County Wicklow and the Glendalough National Park.

Whilst visiting Glencairn, Sir Alan joined Their Royal Highnesses at a dinner

hosted by Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney and Her Majesty's Ambassador to Ireland Robin Barnett.

The Minister for Europe Sir Alan Duncan said:

I am very pleased to have joined Their Royal Highnesses on a visit to Ireland today in celebration of the UK's enduring friendship with our closest neighbour.

The UK and Ireland have a longstanding relationship unlike any other, underpinned by our unique historical and cultural ties.

It was fantastic to receive such a warm welcome, and it clearly demonstrates the deep friendship between our people, and we will continue to build upon this friendship to ensure the best future for everyone on these islands.

It is fitting that our visit follows the signing of the Common Travel Area Memorandum of Understanding, which has given reassurance to millions of UK and Irish citizens on their rights to live, work and travel freely between both our countries.

It is more important than ever that, as the UK prepares to leave the EU, our countries continue to work together as closely as we always have.

Further information

[Speech: PM's speech on new Brexit deal: 21 May 2019](#)

I became Prime Minister almost three years ago – immediately after the British people voted to leave the European Union.

My aim was – and is – to deliver Brexit and help our country move beyond the division of the referendum and into a better future.

A country that works for everyone.

Where everyone has the chance to get on in life and to go as far as their own talent and hard work can take them.

That is a goal that I believe can still unite our country.

I knew that delivering Brexit was not going to be simple or straightforward.

The result in 2016 was decisive, but it was close.

The challenge of taking Brexit from the simplicity of the choice on the ballot paper to the complexity of resetting the country's relationship with 27 of its nearest neighbours was always going to be huge.

While it has proved even harder than I anticipated, I continue to believe that the best way to make a success of Brexit is to negotiate a good exit deal with the EU as the basis of a new deep and special partnership for the future.

That was my pitch to be leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister.

That is what I set out in my Lancaster House speech and that was what my Party's election manifesto said in 2017.

That is in essence what the Labour Party's election manifesto stated too.

And over 80% of the electorate backed parties which stood to deliver Brexit by leaving with a deal.

We have worked hard to deliver that – but we have not yet managed it.

I have tried everything I possibly can to find a way through. It is true that initially I wanted to achieve this predominantly on the back of Conservative and DUP votes.

In our Parliamentary system, that is simply how you normally get things done.

I sought the changes MPs demanded.

I offered to give up the job I love earlier than I would like.

And on 29th March – the day we were meant to leave the EU – if just 30 MPs had voted differently we would have passed the Withdrawal Agreement. And we would be leaving the EU.

But it was not enough.

So I took the difficult decision to try to reach a cross-party deal on Brexit.

Many MPs on both sides were unsettled by this. But I believe it was the right thing to do. We engaged in six weeks of serious talks with the Opposition, offering to compromise.

But in the end those talks were not enough for Labour to reach an agreement with us.

But I do not think that means we should give up.

The House of Commons voted to trigger Article 50.

And the majority of MPs say they want to deliver the result of the

referendum.

So I think we need to help them find a way.

And I believe there is now one last chance to do that.

I have listened to concerns from across the political spectrum.

I have done all I can to address them.

And today I am making a serious offer to MPs across Parliament.

A new Brexit deal.

As part of that deal I will continue to make the case for the Conservative Party to be united behind a policy that can deliver Brexit.

9 out of 10 Conservative MPs have already given the Withdrawal Agreement their backing and I want to reach out to every single one of my colleagues to make the very best offer I can to them.

We came together around an amendment from Sir Graham Brady – and this gave rise to the work on Alternative Arrangements to the backstop.

Although it is not possible for those to replace the backstop in the Withdrawal Agreement, we can start the work now to ensure they are a viable alternative.

So as part of the new Brexit deal we will place the government under a legal obligation to seek to conclude Alternative Arrangements by December 2020 so that we can avoid any need for the backstop coming into force.

I have also listened to Unionist concerns about the backstop.

So the new Brexit deal goes further to address these.

It will commit that, should the backstop come into force, the Government will ensure that Great Britain will stay aligned with Northern Ireland.

We will prohibit the proposal that a future Government could split Northern Ireland off from the UK's customs territory.

And we will deliver on our commitments to Northern Ireland in the December 2017 Joint Report in full.

We will implement paragraph 50 of the Joint Report in law.

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive will have to give their consent on a cross-community basis for new regulations which are added to the backstop.

And we will work with our Confidence and Supply Partners on how these commitments should be entrenched in law.

This new Brexit deal contains significant further changes to protect the economic and constitutional integrity of the United Kingdom and deliver Brexit.

It is a bespoke solution that answers the unique concerns of all parts of the community in Northern Ireland.

But the reality is that after three attempts to secure Parliamentary agreement, we will not leave the European Union unless we have a deal that can command wider cross-party support.

That's why I sat down with the Opposition.

I have been serious about listening to views across the House throughout this process.

That is why when two Labour MPs, Lisa Nandy and Gareth Snell, put forward their proposals to give Parliament a bigger say in the next phase of the negotiations I listened to them.

So the new Brexit deal will set out in law that the House of Commons will approve the UK's objectives for the negotiations on our future relationship with the EU and they will approve the treaties governing that relationship before the Government signs them.

And while the talks with the opposition did not reach a comprehensive agreement, we did make significant progress in a number of areas.

Like on workers' rights. I am absolutely committed to the UK continuing to lead the way on this issue.

But I understand people want guarantees. And I am happy to give them.

So the new Brexit deal will offer new safeguards to ensure these standards are always met.

We will introduce a new Workers' Rights Bill to ensure UK workers enjoy rights that are every bit as good as, or better than, those provided for by EU rules.

And we will discuss further amendments with trade unions and business.

The new Brexit deal will also guarantee there will be no change in the level of environmental protection when we leave the EU.

And we will establish a new independent Office of Environmental Protection to uphold the highest environmental standards and enforce compliance. The new Brexit deal will also place a legal duty on the Government to seek as close to frictionless trade with the EU in goods as possible, subject to being outside the Single Market and ending freedom of movement.

In order to deliver this, the UK will maintain common rules with the EU for goods and agri-food products that are relevant to checks at the border. This

will be particularly important for our manufacturing firms and trade unions, protecting thousands of jobs that depend on just-in-time supply chains.

The most difficult area is the question of customs.

At the heart of delivering Brexit lies a tension between the strength of our ambition to seize the new opportunities that Brexit presents – and the need to protect the jobs and prosperity that are built on an interconnected relationship with other European economies.

This ambition should not be divisive. There are many people who voted to Leave who also want to retain close trading links with Europe. Just as there are many people – like myself – who voted to Remain and yet are excited by the new opportunities that Brexit presents.

Indeed I believe that one of the great opportunities of leaving the European Union is the ability to have an independent trade policy and to benefit from the new jobs and industries that can result from deepening our trade ties with partners across every continent of the world.

But I have never believed that this should come at the expense of the jobs and livelihoods that are sustained by our existing trade with the EU.

And to protect these, both the Government and the Opposition agree that we must have as close as possible to frictionless trade at the UK-EU border.

Now the Government has already put a proposal which delivers the benefits of a customs union but with the ability for the UK to determine its own trade and development policy.

Labour are both sceptical of our ability to negotiate that and don't believe an independent trade policy is in the national interest. They would prefer a comprehensive customs union – with a UK say in EU trade policy but with the EU negotiating on our behalf.

If we are going to pass the Withdrawal Agreement Bill and deliver Brexit, we must resolve this difference.

As part of the cross-party discussions the government offered a compromise option of a temporary customs union on goods only, including a UK say in relevant EU trade policy and an ability to change the arrangement, so a future government could move it in its preferred direction.

We were not able to agree this as part of our cross-party talks – so it is right that Parliament should have the opportunity to resolve this during the passage of the Bill and decide between the government's proposal and a compromise option.

And so the Government will commit in law to let Parliament decide this issue, and to reflect the outcome of this process in legislation.

I have also listened carefully to those who have been arguing for a Second Referendum.

I have made my own view clear on this many times. I do not believe this is a route that we should take, because I think we should be implementing the result of the first referendum, not asking the British people to vote in a second one.

But I recognise the genuine and sincere strength of feeling across the House on this important issue.

The Government will therefore include in the Withdrawal Agreement Bill at introduction a requirement to vote on whether to hold a second referendum.

This must take place before the Withdrawal Agreement can be ratified.

And if the House of Commons were to vote for a referendum, it would be requiring the Government to make provisions for such a referendum – including legislation if it wanted to ratify the Withdrawal Agreement.

So to those MPs who want a second referendum to confirm the deal: you need a deal and therefore a Withdrawal Agreement Bill to make it happen.

So let it have its Second Reading and then make your case to Parliament.

Finally, we cannot expect MPs to vote on the same two documents they previously rejected. So we will seek changes to the political declaration to reflect this new deal.

So our New Brexit Deal makes a ten-point offer to everyone in Parliament who wants to deliver the result of the referendum.

One – the Government will seek to conclude Alternative Arrangements to replace the backstop by December 2020, so that it never needs to be used.

Two – a commitment that, should the backstop come into force, the Government will ensure that Great Britain will stay aligned with Northern Ireland.

Three – the negotiating objectives and final treaties for our future relationship with the EU will have to be approved by MPs.

Four – a new Workers' Rights Bill that guarantees workers' rights will be no less favourable than in the EU.

Five – there will be no change in the level of environmental protection when we leave the EU.

Six – the UK will seek as close to frictionless trade in goods with the EU as possible while outside the single market and ending free movement.

Seven – we will keep up to date with EU rules for goods and agri-food products that are relevant to checks at border protecting the thousands of jobs that depend on just-in-time supply chains.

Eight – the Government will bring forward a customs compromise for MPs to decide on to break the deadlock.

Nine – there will be a vote for MPs on whether the deal should be subject to a referendum.

And ten – there will be a legal duty to secure changes to the political declaration to reflect this new deal.

All of these commitments will be guaranteed in law – so they will endure at least for this Parliament.

The revised deal will deliver on the result of the referendum.

And only by voting for the Withdrawal Agreement Bill at Second Reading, can MPs provide the vehicle Parliament needs to determine how we leave the EU.

So if MPs vote against the Second Reading of this Bill – they are voting to stop Brexit.

If they do so, the consequences could hardly be greater.

Reject this deal and leaving the EU with a negotiated deal any time soon will be dead in the water.

And what would we do then?

Some suggest leaving without a deal.

But whatever you think of that outcome – Parliament has been clear it will do all it can to stop it.

If not no deal, then it would have to be a General Election or a second referendum that could lead to revocation – and no Brexit at all.

Who believes that a General Election at this moment – when we have still not yet delivered on what people instructed us to do – is in the national interest?

I do not.

And my views on second referendum are well known.

Look at what this debate is doing to our politics.

Extending it for months more – perhaps indefinitely – risks opening the door to a nightmare future of permanently polarised politics.

Look around the world and consider the health of liberal democratic politics.

And look across the United Kingdom and consider the impact of failing to deliver on the clear instruction of the British people in a lawful referendum.

We do not have to take that path. Instead, we can deliver Brexit.

All the changes I have set out today have the simple aim of building support

in Parliament to do that.

I believe there is a majority to be won for a Brexit deal in the House of Commons. And by passing a deal we can actually get Brexit done – and move our country forwards.

If we can do so, I passionately believe that we can seize the opportunities that I know lie ahead.

The world is changing fast. Our young people will enjoy opportunities in the future that my generation could have never dreamed of.

This is a great time to be alive. A great future awaits the United Kingdom.

And we have all we need as a nation to make a success of the 2020s and the 2030s. But we will not do so as long as our politics remains stuck in an endless debate on Brexit.

We all have to take some responsibility for the fact that we are in this impasse – and we all have a responsibility to do what we can to get out of it.

The biggest problem with Britain today is its politics.

And we can fix that.

With the right Brexit deal, we can end this corrosive debate.

We can get out of the EU political structures – the Parliament, the Commission, the Council of Ministers that are remote from our lives – and put our own Parliament back in sovereign control of our destiny.

We can stop British laws being enforced by a European court and instead make our own Supreme Court is genuinely supreme.

We can end free movement and design an immigration system based around skills that work for our economy and society.

We can stop making vast annual payments to the EU budget and instead spend our own money on our own priorities like the NHS.

We can get out of the Common Fisheries Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy, and design our own systems around our own needs and resources.

We can do all of these things.

And by leaving with a deal we can do so much more besides.

By reaching an agreement with our EU trading partners we can keep tariff barriers down and goods flowing friction-free across borders.

Protecting jobs, and setting our firms up for future success.

We can guarantee workers' rights and environmental protections.

With a deal we can keep our close security partnerships – and keep working together to keep people safe.

We can ensure that the challenge of the land border between Northern Ireland and Ireland is met in a way that works for people on both sides.

This is a huge opportunity for the United Kingdom.

Out of the EU, out of ever closer union, free to do things differently.

And doing so in a way that protects jobs, protects our security, maintains a close relationship with our friends and works for the whole United Kingdom.

It is practical. It is responsible. It is deliverable.

And right now, it is slipping away from us.

We risk losing a great opportunity.

This deal is not the final word on our future relationship with the EU – it is a stepping stone to reach that future.

A future where the people of the UK determine the road ahead for the country we all love.

This deal lays the groundwork – and settles many of the core issues.

But in the years ahead, Parliament will be able to debate, decide and refine the exact nature of our relationship with the EU.

Some will want us to draw closer, others will want us to become more distant.

Both sides can make their case in the months and years ahead.

The key thing is, decisions will be made not by MEPs or Commissioners or the EU Council – but by the United Kingdom Parliament, elected by the British people.

That is what being an independent nation state is all about.

Those debates, those decisions, are for the future.

What matters now is honouring the result of the referendum and seizing the opportunity that is right before us.

So we are making a new offer to find common ground in Parliament.

That is now the only way to deliver Brexit.

Over the next two weeks the government will be making the case for this deal in Parliament, in the media and in the country.

On what is best and right for our country now and in the future. And on what the majority of British people of all political persuasions want to see

happen.

Tomorrow I will make a statement to the House of Commons.

And there will opportunities throughout the Bill for MPs on all sides to have their say.

But I say with conviction to every MP of every party – I have compromised. Now I ask you to compromise too.

We have been given a clear instruction by the people we are supposed to represent.

So help me find a way to honour that instruction, move our country and our politics forward, and build the better future that all of us want to see.

Press release: Violent burglar has sentence increased following Attorney General's Office intervention

A violent offender who attacked a man inside his home and smashed his head through glass had his jail term extended by the Court of Appeal after it was found to be too lenient.

Desmond Sage, 52, forced his way into the victim's house and attacked him, grabbing him by the throat, pushing him into a glass cabinet several times, causing the glass to shatter. When the victim managed to escape outside he was attacked with a baton – all while his elderly mother was in the house.

The victim suffered a deep wound to his right forearm and lacerations to his scalp, the right side of his back and his right foot. He had to take 6 weeks off work and was left with permanent scarring, some of which required plastic surgery. The incident has also caused difficulty in caring for his mother.

In March, Sage was jailed at Chelmsford Crown Court for 6 years and 6 months for offences including aggravated burglary, wounding with intent and possession of an offensive weapon. The Attorney General's Office then referred this sentence for being unduly lenient. Today, after a hearing at the Court of Appeal, it has been increased to 9 years' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General, Lucy Frazer QC MP, said:

“Sage's attack violated the safety of the victim's own home. The injuries sustained in the attack have affected the victim's ability to care for his elderly mother. It was important this harm was reflected in the sentence.”