

# Speech: EU and UN partnership vital for rules-based international system

Thank you Mr President, and thank you High Representative Mogherini for your own excellent briefing today. It is very striking listening to you – just how central the European Union is to every single issue that is on the Council's agenda. So it is very useful to have this level of engagement.

Mr President, today happens to be an important day for the UK's own relationship with the European Union so I wanted to set out at the beginning that notwithstanding the United Kingdom's forthcoming departure from the European Union, it will of course be mutually beneficial for the UK and the European Union to continue to co-operate closely across the three pillars of the United Nation's work.

Today I'd like to touch on some of the issues that you brought up in your presentation. First on Syria; like others, we very much welcome the fact that Brussels will host the third EU-UN Conference on the future of Syria and the region. The United Kingdom, like other colleagues round the table, strongly supports the UN-led political process. And we call on the Syrian regime – and those that have influence over the Syrian regime- to engage in the political process and to implement the obligations that the regime has under UNSCR 2254. We particularly welcome the recent announcement of EU sanctions against regime figures. And the UK will remain at the forefront of responding to the humanitarian crisis in Syria. We have already given £2.8 billion since 2012, and we will remain engaged.

Second on the subject of Iran – that you raised. We also warmly welcome the EU's work and your personal engagement in support of the JCPOA. We completely agree with you that it's a vital instrument in neutralising the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran. And the UK will remain committed to the JCPOA and we will uphold it as long as Iran continues to meet its commitment in full. We nevertheless continue to see Iran's actions in its neighbourhood as harmful and destabilising, in particular in Syria, in Lebanon and in Yemen.

Third, you spoke about the question of reconciliation in the Western Balkans. Again we very much welcome and support the EU's continued efforts in bringing lasting stability to the region, not least through the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo. The UK was the first State to recognise Kosovo and its independence in 2008, and we will continue to work in full support for the recognition of Kosovo, which will itself enable political normalisation and deliver increased prosperity for citizens across the region. I should add, however, that we do have concerns that a Dialogue agreement based solely on border changes could risk endangering stability in Kosovo, Serbia and in the region.

And finally turning to Africa, we welcome both the developing dialogue between the European Union and the African Union, and the EU's growing co-operation with the UN in states and regions affected by conflict. The EU's

Common Security and Defence Policy Missions, for example in the Sahel, in Somalia and the Central African Republic, have all delivered niche capabilities and nurtured valued partnerships, whilst enabling the UN to direct its resources towards action – where it can add value. As UN Mission mandates come up for renewal – including a number this month on Somalia, DRC and South Sudan– it will be important to strengthen the complementarity between the UN and EU instruments as we move forward.

Mr President, in the coming period, the UK will continue to work in this Council, and with the European Union and other partners, in support of the wider rules-based international system – whether this is in promoting accountability in Myanmar, or whether it's enforcing sanctions against DPRK, or whether it's in defending Ukraine's territorial integrity. A close future partnership between the European and the United Nations will be vital if we are to achieve these important aims.

And Mr President, if I might finish with one question. Particularly given that it is Commission on the Status of Women week here at the UN. I think it would be very interesting to hear your thoughts, High Representative, on how the UN and the EU could cooperate more in the field of Women, Peace and Security – particularly when it comes to our peace operations and our involvement in political processes. Thank you.

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## [News story: Government has launched its first holiday pay advertising campaign](#)

- confusion around holiday pay has meant that shift workers, people on zero-hour contracts and agency workers are missing out on the holiday pay they are entitled to
- the government has launched its first holiday pay advertising campaign to raise awareness of rights, as part of the modern Industrial Strategy

In the UK 1.8 million people are not receiving the holiday pay they are entitled to, resulting in them missing out on an estimated £1.8 billion each year. A new poll, commissioned by the government, recently identified that many UK workers do not understand their holiday pay rights, with half of those surveyed incorrectly believing that zero-hour contracted workers are not entitled to holiday pay.

In response, the government launched its first 'It comes with the job' advertising campaign encouraging workers to understand their rights and employers to understand their legal obligations in a fairer workplace.

Much of the UK working population are full-time, permanent employees on fixed hours and pay and receive the same pay even if they take holiday. However, the situation is more complex for people who do not have regular hours or do not receive the same pay each week or month. The lack of knowledge of holiday pay means that some workers such as flexible workers, people on zero-hour contracts, agency workers, and temporary staff are more at risk of not receiving the holiday pay they are entitled to.

The holiday pay advertising campaign follows the biggest upgrade to workers' rights in a generation announced by the government in 2018 and is a vital part of its modern Industrial Strategy to create an economy that works for all. It aims to reach workers and employers through video on-demand, Spotify advertising, and digital website and social media advertising, as well as adverts in train stations and on the roadside.

The UK leads the way in workers' rights with the government recently announcing fresh measures giving Parliament, trade unions and businesses a new and enhanced role in shaping the future of workers' rights after Brexit.

The government has also published updated guidance providing advice to employers and workers on how to calculate holiday pay.

For more information about their rights and to calculate holiday pay, workers and employers should visit GOV.UK:

The government commissioned Kantar Media to conduct a poll of over 2,000 people to understand public perceptions of holiday pay entitlement.

The Unpaid Britain Report published by Middlesex University and the Trust for London found that workers are missing out on £1.8 billion of holiday pay each year.

The government campaign aims to tackle barriers associated with holiday pay, including workers being unsure about how many paid holiday days they are entitled to and feeling unable to speak to their employer. It, and the updated guidance reflects the views expressed by Matthew Taylor in his [Modern Working Practice review](#) which stated that the government needs to do more to promote awareness of holiday pay entitlements.

[Protecting and enhancing worker rights after the UK withdrawal from the European Union](#) was published on 6 March 2019.

The [Good Work Plan](#) comes as the latest response to the independent [Taylor Review of impact modern working practices](#) (2017). The review found that the strength of the UK's labour market is built on flexibility but that a clearer focus was needed on quality of work as well as the quantity of jobs.

The government's modern [Industrial Strategy](#) published in 2017, sets out how the whole of the UK can build on its strengths, extend them into the future, and capitalise on new opportunities.

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## [News story: Events: Groceries Code Adjudicator](#)

**Date** 8 April  
**Event** Natural & Organic Products Europe at ExCel, London.  
**Start time** 2 pm  
**What's happening** Your chance to understand the Groceries Supply Code of Practice (the Code). In 45 minutes Christine will explain how the Code can benefit you as a supplier, when to speak up and the progress the GCA has secured so far. Afterwards Christine and the team will be walking the event floor. Have a [look at the event programme](#).  
**Other information** 10 April Farm Shop & Deli Show at the NEC, Birmingham. 9.30 am Take 30 minutes out of your day to come and listen to Christine's presentation to understand your rights as a supplier and find out how the Code protects you. Afterwards Christine and the team will be walking the show floor. [Review the show programme](#).  
25 April GCA Webinar hosted by University of East Anglia. 2 pm Join Christine for a 45 minute presentation followed by a Q&A as she talks about her role as the Groceries Code Adjudicator and how she has brought change to the groceries sector and tackled deep-rooted systemic problems through her work with both retailers and suppliers. To join, please email Sophie Barnard at [Sophie.Barnard@uea.ac.uk](mailto:Sophie.Barnard@uea.ac.uk).  
24 June GCA Annual Conference at Church House, London. 10 am Christine will present her annual report and her priorities for the coming 12 months. YouGov will announce the results of the GCA's annual survey and Christine or a member of her team will be available for 1-2-1's with direct suppliers. You can [register for the conference now](#).

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## [Press release: Digital tool to help deliver thousands of homes](#)

- Homes England launches its interactive Land Hub, updated with 148 sites available for development in the next 18 months.
- Sites total 2,500 acres of developable land.

Nearly 2,500 acres ready for development will be made available to developers, including small and medium-sized building companies, to purchase and get properties built.

The tool has been developed by Homes England, the Government's housing accelerator.

The Communities Secretary, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

"We are determined to help a new generation realise the dream of home ownership which is why we are determined to see 300,000 new homes built a

year by the mid-2020s.

“The Land Hub will help match developers to sites where they can build the properties communities need.”

Over the next 18 months, 148 sites are going to be made available via the online Land Hub with the potential for thousands of homes to be built. The site will include details of the planning status, size and proposed use – such as residential, industrial or commercial – of each site.

Getting the whole sector behind the latest innovations in development and building will be key to achieving 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s. Homes England is supporting builders to do this through initiatives such as the Government’s £4.5 billion Home Building Fund, which provides support to builders using modern methods of construction and new, innovative builders entering the market.

Sir Edward Lister, Chairman of Homes England, said:

“Bringing another 148 sites to market demonstrates the scale of Homes England’s ambition to unlock land and accelerate the delivery of homes the country needs.

“We are keen to speak to developers about the opportunities in our latest pipeline and want to collaborate with both major developers and smaller builders to create a more resilient housing market.”

The extra sites being released to developers follows the news that Homes England has agreed a partnership with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to develop land being released by the Ministry of Defence. This has the potential to deliver over 10,000 homes across seven brownfield sites.

Nick Walkley, Chief Executive of Homes England, said:

“This partnership provides another great opportunity for Homes England to intervene in the housing market and make homes happen.

“By combining our skills and expertise with the DIO to progress brownfield sites no longer needed by the Ministry of Defence, we will speed up the process of providing much-needed homes.”

ENDS

For more information contact Sarah Tucker, PR and Media Officer at Homes England on 020 7393 2261/07970 973134 or email [sarah.tucker@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.tucker@homesengland.gov.uk)

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# Speech: 90th Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW

Madame Chair, Director General

The United Kingdom supports the statement made by the Ambassador of Romania on behalf of the European Union.

We welcome the Fact Finding Mission's extremely thorough and well-evidenced report on the incident in Douma on 7 April 2018. After nearly a year of meticulous investigation, often in challenging circumstances, the FFM has drawn a clear conclusion: that a toxic chemical, likely molecular chlorine, was used as a weapon. We remember the many victims of that attack and their families today.

This is the latest case in an appalling series where the OPCW has confirmed chemical weapons use in Syria. We now look forward to further investigation by the Investigation and Identification Team to identify those responsible for this hideous attack.

We all heard in the Director-General's statement how the Technical Secretariat are redoubling efforts to get to the bottom of the serious gaps and inconsistencies in Syria's Declaration. The Syrian Arab Republic's failure to cooperate meaningfully with the OPCW over the last five years to resolve these issues is truly shocking. It is imperative that Syria comes to the meeting with the DAT next week ready to address the many deficiencies in their Declaration.

Madame Chair,

We are meeting today just over a year after a deadly chemical weapon was used in my own country. As with chemical weapons usage in Syria, this was a clear violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the UK remains determined to bring those responsible to account. The international community has come together in an unprecedented way over the last year to emphasise our determination to uphold the global norm against chemical weapons use.

As part of our collective response to the incident in Salisbury, the UK fully supported the proposal submitted by the US, Canada and the Netherlands to update the Schedules to the Convention. We welcome this Council's decision in January to recommend adoption of that proposal.

In relation to Russia's schedule proposal, it is regretful that their Delegation did not take on board the views of many states, the UK included, that would have enabled us to support most of it.. Instead their priority appears to have been spreading misinformation and outright falsehoods outside this room to distract from Russia's own culpability.

The UK also underscores its support for the decision taken by the European Council on 21 January to impose sanctions in response to chemical weapons use

in Syria and Salisbury. Such strong collective action sends a clear message that we will not tolerate chemical weapons use.

Madame Chair,

The UK welcomes the 7 March report from the Director General on progress in implementing the June Special Session Decision on addressing the threat from Chemical Weapons use. The adoption of the programme and budget at the November Conference of States Parties was an important step forward and we support the concrete steps taken towards information sharing with relevant bodies. The UK will provide voluntary contributions to enable implementation of the June Decision, including £500,000 for the important new ChemTech Centre.

We welcome the proposals presented in the DG's note of 15 November 2018, pursuant to paragraph 21 of the June Decision, and look forward to their further elaboration. Strengthening the implementation of the verification regime and enhancing assistance to states parties are important components of the overall effort to address the threats from chemical weapons use.

Finally Madame Chair, the UK was grateful for the non-paper proposing a way forward on addressing OPCW tenure policy and related issues. We support the idea of a facilitation and are grateful to the Ambassadors who are willing to guide this process forwards.

Thank you