

# Press release: PM to meet ministers from devolved nations at Joint Ministerial Committee

The First Ministers of Scotland and Wales, along with representatives from the Northern Ireland Civil Service, will come to Downing Street for an update on the negotiations and to discuss recent progress on Clause 11 of the EU Withdrawal Bill, which would see the vast majority of returning devolved powers directly transferred to Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast. Domestic issues and the importance of Northern Ireland's continued involvement in the process, in the absence of an Executive, will also be discussed.

The Prime Minister will make clear her absolute commitment to devolution, strengthening the Union and delivering legal certainty for businesses and consumers across the UK as we forge a new, deep and special partnership with the EU.

She will also confirm the government's intention for the devolved nations to not only maintain their existing powers once we leave the EU but also gain significant new decision-making abilities, including across issues such as water quality and energy efficiency.

The devolved administrations will also be given an update on the latest on the investigation into the incident in Salisbury.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, the Prime Minister Theresa May said:

At this important meeting with the devolved administrations today, I will be making clear my commitment to a deal that brings our country together, protects the security and prosperity of all our communities and business sectors, and reinforces our Union of nations.

We will discuss the EU negotiations and EU Withdrawal Bill and how the UK Government has tabled an amendment that will ensure the vast majority of powers returning from the EU that cross over with devolved competencies will transfer directly to Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.

I am determined to secure a settlement that delivers an unprecedented democratic dividend for the people of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, while protecting and preserving the precious Union that is at the heart of our past, present and future success.

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## Press release: Foreign Secretary calls for a united response

While we await an explanation from Russia of how a military-grade nerve agent of a type developed by Russia came to be used in the UK, the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has today been calling his counterparts and leaders of international organisations to set out what we know and our concerns that, if as we suspect is highly likely the Russian state was responsible, this would be further reckless behaviour which threatens the international community and requires an international response.

The Foreign Secretary has emphasised that if this was a direct act by the Russian state then it would not simply be a threat to the UK, but a clear violation of the chemical weapons convention, a breach of international law and a threat to those who abide by the rules-based international order as a whole.

The French Foreign Minister Le Drian offered France's total solidarity for an unacceptable act, and noted that President Macron had promised to stand by the UK as it prepares to take concrete measures against Russia's breach of international order. The French government stressed particular concerns about Russia's use of chemical weapons elsewhere, as is evident with their support to Asad's murderous regime in Syria.

In speaking to the German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, the Foreign Secretary emphasised how countering Russian disinformation, halting Russia's adventurism in the western Balkans and reducing Russia's ongoing involvement in Ukraine's humanitarian crisis were issues of paramount importance to Germany and the UK alike.

Speaking to the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, the Foreign Secretary reiterated the importance of NATO standing together to counter the threat Russia poses not just to the UK, but to our NATO allies also. He was pleased that the NATO Secretary General expressed his support and solidarity, and agreed that NATO unity was paramount, as it was to counter other existing threats to NATO partners, including in eastern Europe where UK troops are stationed alongside troops from various Allies. They both agreed that Russian actions repeatedly threaten the security of NATO partners – from the Baltics, Balkans, Ukraine and Georgia – and NATO must stand as an alliance to call out Putin's behaviour. The UK will brief the North Atlantic Council at tomorrow's session.

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## **Press release: Attempted attack on Palestinian Prime Minister: Statement**

I am shocked to hear of the attack on Palestinian Prime Minister Hamdallah's convoy in Gaza this morning. I strongly condemn this attack, for which there is no justification. My thoughts are with those who were injured, and I wish them a speedy recovery.

The UK continues to support the return of the legitimate Palestinian Authority to the Gaza Strip, and we encourage those involved to engage constructively towards this objective. We urge non-violence, dialogue and progress towards a sustainable reconciliation and an improvement in the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

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## **Press release: PM call with Chancellor Merkel: 13 March 2018**

The Prime Minister spoke to Chancellor Merkel earlier this afternoon to update her on the ongoing investigation into the Salisbury incident.

The Prime Minister set out the conclusion reached by the UK Government that it was highly likely that Russia was responsible for the attack against Sergei and Yulia Skripal.

They discussed the pattern of aggressive Russian behaviour and agreed it would be important to act in unison with allies to counter it.

Chancellor Merkel condemned the attack and said she stood in full solidarity with the UK.

They agreed that the international community should coordinate closely as the investigation developed and in the wake of Russia's response.

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## **Press release: PM call with President Trump: 13 March 2018**

The Prime Minister spoke to President Trump earlier this afternoon to update

him on the ongoing investigation into the Salisbury incident.

The Prime Minister set out the conclusion reached by the UK Government that it was highly likely that Russia was responsible for the attack against Sergei and Yulia Skripal.

President Trump said the US was with the UK all the way, agreeing that the Russian Government must provide unambiguous answers as to how this nerve agent came to be used.