

News story: UK-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting 2017 – Joint Statement

1. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the UK, the Rt Hon Boris Johnson, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Rt Hon Gavin Williamson, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, H.E. Mr. Taro Kono, and the Minister of Defence, H.E. Mr. Itsunori Onodera met in London on 14 December 2017 for the third UK-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting.
2. The Ministers reaffirmed that the UK and Japan are each other's closest security partners in Europe and Asia respectively. They welcomed the strong progress made in defence and security co-operation since the last UK-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting. They expressed their commitment to elevating their global security partnership to the next level, as confirmed during Prime Minister May's visit to Japan in August 2017, and to promoting new and comprehensive programme of co-operation, building on the "UK-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation". In this regard, they welcomed the creation of a joint Action Plan on security and defence co-operation, which will be revised regularly as a living document.
3. The Ministers affirmed the UK and Japan's global strategic partnership, which is underpinned by common strategic interests and fundamental values. They expressed their commitment to maintaining the rules-based international system, which is the foundation of global security and prosperity, including through harnessing the UK's vision of "Global Britain" and Japan's vision of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. They reconfirmed the importance of promoting quality infrastructure with open, fair and sustainable access for enhanced regional connectivity. They emphasised the importance of international order based on the rule of law, and expressed their strong opposition to any unilateral actions that increase tensions or change the status quo by force or coercion.
4. The Ministers reaffirmed that a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law is an important pillar of the stability and prosperity of the international community and committed to strengthening maritime security co-operation. They confirmed that it is of mutual benefit to work together, with partners, to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Japan's Ministers welcomed the UK's strengthened security engagement in this region, including through visits by maritime, land and air forces, such as the potential deployment of a UK aircraft carrier. Japan also welcomed the UK's commitment to the security of the Asia-Pacific region through the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA).

5. The Ministers condemned, in the strongest terms, North Korea's continued development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in flagrant violation of relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, including the launch of a ballistic missile with possible intercontinental range on 29 November 2017. They strongly urged North Korea to comply with all relevant UNSC resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and stressed that they would never recognise a nuclear-armed North Korea. The Ministers affirmed that they would apply maximum pressure on North Korea to urge it to take concrete actions towards abandoning its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and realising denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. To this end, the Ministers called on the international community to fully implement UNSC resolutions, including resolution 2375 adopted unanimously on 11 September 2017. They urged other countries to reconsider economic relations with North Korea, and shared the view that they would continue to closely work together to take measures at the UNSC, including those against sanction evasions and further provocations. The Ministers also strongly urged North Korea to end human rights violations and resolve the abductions issue immediately.
6. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining a rules-based order in the maritime domain based on the principles of international law, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and to the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes through diplomatic and legal means. They remained concerned about the situation in the East and South China Seas and strongly opposed to any unilateral actions that could increase tensions. They also supported the early conclusion of negotiations to establish an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. The Ministers shared recognition that such diplomatic effort should lead to demilitarisation of disputed features.
7. The Ministers confirmed their commitment to ensuring the stability and prosperity of the Middle East. They welcomed progress in fight against ISIL, such as announcement of the liberation of all Iraqi territories and Raqqa in Syria, as an important step for the peace and stability in the Middle East and the international community, and emphasised the importance of bringing ISIL to justice. They underscored the significance of supporting the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the nuclear programme of Iran, and its continued implementation by all parties.
8. The Ministers reiterated their solid commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and requested for the peaceful solution through the complete implementation of the Minsk process by all parties. The Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the engagement to political and economic stability of Ukraine and its reform programme.
9. The Ministers welcomed the progress of defence co-operation through bilateral and multilateral joint exercises, including UK-Japan bilateral exercise Guardian North on the occasion of UK Typhoons' visit to Japan in 2016. The

Ministers confirmed that in 2018 UK-Japan bilateral ground exercise would take place for the first time in Japan and that both countries would take various opportunities such as deployment of HMS Argyll and HMS Sutherland to the Asia-Pacific region to conduct bilateral exercises. The Ministers also decided to seek to regularise bilateral exercises and others including observer exchanges. The Ministers also welcomed steady progress in unit-to-unit exchanges, which are an important basis of the bilateral relationship.

10. The Ministers confirmed the progress of the UK-Japan High Level Defence Equipment and Technology Cooperation Steering Panel, and defence equipment and technology co-operation, and looked forward to deepening collaboration. Reflecting on the progress of the co-operative research project on the feasibility study on a Joint New Air-to-Air Missile (JNAAM) Phase 2, the Ministers looked forward to the early embodiment of the joint research project including the research prototyping and the launch testing. The Ministers welcomed that the first bilateral co-operative research project of Chemical and Biological Protection Technology was successfully completed in July 2017. They welcomed progress made on the Project for the Cooperative Research on Personnel Vulnerability Evaluation, and confirmed the exploration of possible co-operation on projects of interest including the Joint Preliminary Study on Potential Collaborative Opportunities for Future Combat Air System/ Future Fighter, launched in March this year.
11. On the basis of the recently concluded Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), the Ministers shared the view that they would enhance co-operation in providing each other with logistical, technical and professional support. They shared the view that they would build on the ACSA and, as a priority, work on a framework to improve administrative, policy and legal procedures to facilitate joint operations and exercises between British Armed Forces and Japan Self-Defense Forces.
12. The Ministers welcomed the progress of co-ordination of capacity-building in developing countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Middle East and Africa. They shared the view that they would use a coordination mechanism for future joint capacity- building in strategic priorities such as maritime security and safety; counterterrorism; cyber security; humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; promotion of quality infrastructure; gender; peacekeeping operations; and demining.
13. The Ministers welcomed the UK-Japan counter-terrorism dialogue scheduled in January 2018 and confirmed that the UK and Japan would further deepen co-operation, including counter terrorism co-operation through concrete measures on security toward Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games and capacity- building for counter-terrorism and aviation security in third countries.
14. Recognising the rapidly growing threat of malicious cyber activities, the Ministers shared the view that they would further strengthen information sharing and co-operation in the field of cyber security, including by holding

again the UK-Japan Bilateral Consultations on Cyberspace in February 2018. They confirmed that the UK and Japan would strengthen co-ordinated response and information sharing in order to deter, mitigate and attribute malicious cyber activities.

15. The Ministers shared the view that they would continue co-operation in multilateral frameworks such as the UN, G7 and G20. The Ministers reaffirmed that the UK and Japan will work together to expedite UN reform, in support of Secretary-General Guterres' initiatives on peace and security reform, development system reform and management reform. On UNSC reform, emphasising the need to launch text-based negotiations during the 72th session of the UN General Assembly, the Ministers shared the view that they would accelerate the co-operation towards an early reform of the UNSC including the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent categories of its membership. The UK reaffirmed its strong support for UNSC permanent membership for Japan, as well as the other G4 nations, alongside permanent African representation, and expanded non-permanent African representation. With regards to NATO, of which the UK is a key member, the Ministers expressed their intention to promote further NATO-Japan co-operation to enhance Japan's partnership.
16. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of engaging in Women, Peace and Security, providing support and protection for the victims of sexual violence in conflict, and prevention of conflict-related sexual violence.
17. The Ministers confirmed that the UK and Japan would continue to work together globally to end violence against children and modern slavery, including full implementation of the Call to Action. They shared the view that they would make active participation in the WePROTECT Global Alliance to end online child sexual exploitation and in the 2030 Agenda for Children: End Violence Solutions Summit.
18. The Ministers reaffirmed that outer space activity is fundamental to our mutual prosperity and security. They decided to strengthen co-operation to address safety and security challenges in outer space and promote international norms of responsible behaviour for all outer space activities, through further dialogues. They also welcomed the establishment of a new framework of industrial space co-operation under the Industrial Policy Dialogue.
19. The Ministers reiterated that the UK and Japan would continue to co-operate on disarmament and non-proliferation, upholding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. They underlined the importance of working together with partners across the international community to prevent proliferation and make progress on nuclear disarmament through concrete and practical measures with the participation of nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states. In this context, the Ministers welcomed the adoption on 4 December 2017 by the UN General Assembly of Japan's resolution

on Nuclear Disarmament, co-sponsored by the UK.

20. The Ministers recognised the importance of close co-operation to control the transfer and illicit flow of conventional arms and dual use items, especially those used in WMD delivery. The UK welcomed Japan's appointment as President for the Fourth Conference of the Arms Trade Treaty. The Ministers shared the view that they would work together to ensure strong progress on our common objectives for the Treaty.
21. The Ministers welcomed the close bilateral co-operation in civil nuclear energy, such as through the sharing of experience and expertise at the Sixth Annual UK-Japan Nuclear Dialogue held in London in October this year, and other collaborative projects. At the same time, both sides welcomed Japanese industry involvement in the UK's new build programme as part of a broad and strategic industrial partnership between the two countries.
22. The Ministers welcomed the progress of information sharing and analysis between the two countries, and shared the view that they would strengthen co-operation in this field.
23. The Ministers instructed their respective officials to closely follow up the results of today's meeting and report to the next Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting.

News story: Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Mounts Bay in Bermuda

RFA Mounts Bay has been on deployment to the region as part of her Atlantic Patrol Tasking (North) duties, to provide humanitarian and disaster relief for the UK's Caribbean Overseas Territories and Bermuda.

This year RFA Mounts Bay has been in the Caribbean for hurricane season, ready to provide support at a moment's notice. Tasked by the Royal Navy, she was the UK's first military response to the Caribbean during Hurricanes Irma, Jose and Maria.

During the visit the Commanding Officer paid calls upon the Governor John Rankin and on Premier Burt. RFA Mounts Bay will also provide some logistical support to the Royal Bermuda Regiment and will host a Disaster Management Presentation of the vessels capabilities for members of Bermuda's Emergency Measures Organisation – the primary organisation for Disaster Management co-ordination on island. RFA Mounts Bay will also host tours for the Bermuda Sea Cadets and the Bermuda Scouts Association.

The Governor for Bermuda, John Rankin CMG, commented on the visit:

We warmly welcome the first visit of RFA Mounts Bay to Bermuda. I saw at first hand her invaluable work on crisis preparedness and crisis response in the Caribbean during the recent Hurricanes. I have no doubt that her presence in the affected areas in the immediate aftermath of the recent storms saved lives for which we are all eternally grateful. Thankfully, Mounts Bay visits us in calmer conditions and her visit provides a great opportunity for the sharing of experiences and capabilities between our own Emergency Measures Organisation and that of the RFA Mounts Bay itself. This can only help to strengthen our preparations should such extreme weather conditions befall Bermuda in the future.

Notes for Editors

- RFA Mounts Bay (L3008) is one of three Landing Ship Docks (Auxiliary) and was built by BAE (Naval Ships) at Govan on the River Clyde.
- Launched by Lady Band in April 2004, she was the first Bay class vessel, and following extensive sea trials was accepted into service in July 2006.
- A formal service of dedication took place in September of that year to mark the Transfer of Operational Command to Fleet, with the ship honoured by the attendance of her sponsor Lady Sarah Band and her husband, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, former First Sea Lord.
- The summer of 2007 saw RFA Mounts Bay receive the great privilege of the Honorary Freedom of her affiliated town, Falmouth and she continues to maintain close links with the Cornish region.
- So far during operational Service, RFA Mounts Bay has already played a key role in many amphibious exercises, including operations off Sierra Leone, the Baltic Regions and also many more, closer to home, around the coast of the United Kingdom and Western Europe.

For more information see [RFA Mounts Bay](#)

Press release: Milestone at Shoreham flood defence project

A major flood defence scheme that will significantly reduce flood risk to over 2,300 properties in Shoreham-by-Sea and Lancing has taken a step towards completion.

Work at Reach E3 of the Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls Scheme is now complete, and the northern section of the Downs Links and Lower Beach Road re-opened on Friday 8 December. Also, as a result of updated modelling for the project, part of the initial plan has been adapted and removed the need for major road works on the A283.

The scheme is made up of 10 individual reaches, and work has now started on 8. Construction on Reach E3, which includes raised walls and embankments, started in 2016. Steel piling has been installed along the landward side of the path, and has been clad with brick. The Downs Link path was diverted while the work was completed.

Before the advanced modelling took place, the A283 in Shoreham-by-Sea would have been closed for 12 weeks during construction in spring 2018. As a result of the work that has already taken place, only a very small number of properties would benefit from the road raising work. Instead, these properties will be protected with an alternative solution to ensure they also receive a high level of protection, and the road closures will not take place.

Elsewhere in the scheme, work on the slipway at Emerald Quay and Sussex Wharf is advancing and the first panes of glass of the riverside flood defence have been installed. The majority of the new wall at Ferry Bridge is complete, and vegetation clearance at Riverbank in preparation for construction to start in the new year is finished. Work at Emerald Quay, Shoreham Harbour Club and Shoreham Fort is progressing well. Much of the work behind the High Street in Shoreham has been completed and is open to the public.

Phil Prydderch, Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

It's great news for Shoreham-by-Sea residents that we will be able to enhance their flood protection without the planned road closures. We are committed to protecting all members of the community, and will continue to work with local residents to make them more resilient against flooding.

When complete, the Shoreham scheme will reduce the tidal flood risk to thousands of homes and a significant number of commercial properties in the area, as well as protecting important local

infrastructure such as the road network, railway line and Shoreham Airport. This is one part of the Environment Agency's national effort to reduce the risk of flooding for at least 300,000 homes by 2020/21.

The Shoreham scheme's dedicated project visitor centre is at Beach Green Car Park, Shoreham-by-Sea, and is open between midday and 5:00pm on weekdays. Further information on the scheme is available on GOV.UK or by calling 03708 506506.

You can also request information by emailing shorehamwestbank@environment-agency.gov.uk or by writing to SSD Enquiries, Environment Agency, Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road, Worthing, BN11 1LD.

Notes to editors

The visitor centre may be closed during scheduled visits from schools and interest groups. Flood impact maps showing the detailed modelling outcomes are available upon request.

All media enquiries: 0800 141 2743. Or email southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk

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[News story: MMO announce 2018 panel dates for the EMFF scheme in England](#)

Panels are required to consider applications over £100,000.00 and four panels will be held in 2018 giving applicants the maximum opportunity to apply for EMFF funding. Since the launch of the scheme in January 2016 there has been significant uptake so far. This has resulted in some funding areas becoming under pressure in 2018.

The 2018 panel dates are as follows:

- The first panel will be held on 21 March 2018. Applicants are asked to ensure their applications reach the MMO by 19 January 2018.
- A second panel will take place on 13 June with a deadline for applications of 13 April.
- A third panel will convene on 5 September with an application deadline of 30 June.
- A final panel will take place on 21 November with an application deadline of 14 September.

Commenting on the panels, MMO Director of Finance, EU and Licensing, Michelle

Willis said:

“It’s imperative that people apply for funding by the panel dates and because of the scheme’s success, some funding areas will come under pressure during 2018. We want to ensure enough funding is available for projects to take place so we are asking for those interested to submit their applications as quickly as possible.

“The EMFF Scheme is very diverse and whilst we have received a wide range of projects since launch, we continue to welcome projects in 2018 including innovation projects, scientific – based projects and those with an emphasis on marine conservation.

“I would urge people to note the deadline dates for panel applications and take the time to submit applications which are of the highest possible quality to maximise the chances of application success.”

Please visit the MMO website for [guidance and information on how to make an application.](#)”

[News story: Northumberland Armed Forces Forum](#)

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This well attended event drew over 30 representatives from across the region and reflected the interest in supporting the armed forces community in the region.

The issues of alcohol and veterans was covered by a presentation by Dr Sarah Wigham, Newcastle University, on research funded by Forces in Mind Trust. Her work dealt with evidence based interventions to tackle alcohol abuse in the veteran community. This multinational project drew heavily upon research from around the world and explored how this work can be adapted to meet the needs of veterans.

The forum discussed the complex issues relating to alcohol problems and veterans and the how the Mess/NAFI culture has evolved and the effect of cheap alcohol on serving personnel.

The forum was the opportunity of the incoming Royal British Legion, Advice and Information Officer, Ms Louise Liddell to introduce herself to the community and to brief the community on the Legion’s work in the Northumberland region.

The wider veteran support environment was explored, specifically there was an

exploration of the Northumberland Outreach Worker Project by its representative Mr Jonny Harrison. Even though he had only been in post 10 weeks he was already working 25 cases, of which 70% involved mental health issues and described their project as being so busy they have had to advertise for another member of staff to help deliver services.

The new [Albermarle Barracks Military Wives Choir](#), formed a year ago and has had a very successful appearance at Hexham Abbey and St Nicholas Cathedral. This Choir was formed with the express purpose of creating a supportive community rather than an award-winning choir and is made up of wives, fiancées, and co-habiting partners, who might otherwise feel isolated.

The choir is also open to women serving in the armed services and female veterans, plus wives, daughters of veterans. It is not restricted to Albermarle and is open to all who qualify across the region. It is now one of more than 200 military wives choirs across the UK. The Albermarle choir was set up because the nearest ones were in Catterick and Edinburgh.

The forum was a very useful meeting that allowed the VAPC to meet with other service providers and is an important part of the board's engagement strategy.