

# Press release: Statement by Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

Statement by Secretary of State for Northern Ireland the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP:

It is a privilege to be to have been asked by the Prime Minister to continue to serve as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland – particularly at such a crucial moment for Northern Ireland and the whole United Kingdom.

The UK Government remains steadfast in its commitment to the Belfast Agreement and to governing in the interests of all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. It provides the basis for Northern Ireland's continued political progress and as the Government we remain firmly committed to this.

My immediate priority is reaching agreement on restoring an inclusive power-sharing Executive – which is what the people of Northern Ireland voted for in the March Assembly elections.

The statutory deadline to restore a functioning Executive to Northern Ireland is 29 June. Time is short but there was real progress in the last round of political discussion. Agreement between the parties can be reached if there is goodwill on all sides.

Talks must resume again as soon as possible and I will meet the party leaders and Irish Foreign Minister Flanagan in Belfast tomorrow. All those involved must engage in the full knowledge that the deadline of 29 June is final and immovable.

The UK government will do everything in its power, working alongside the Irish government in relation to those areas where they have responsibility, to contribute to and support the process, steadfastly upholding the principles of the Belfast Agreement and its successors.

Like the overwhelming majority across the community in Northern Ireland, I believe a devolved government in Belfast is the best way to address the key decisions which affect people's day to day lives – whether these relate to the economy, security, public services or issues of policing and justice, as well as addressing the legacy of the past.

A Northern Ireland Executive also has a vital part to play in ensuring that Northern Ireland's interests are represented as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

Northern Ireland's political leaders now have this chance to take control and restore effective power sharing government under the current assembly mandate. If they do not, the power to make decisions passes to others. Their choice in the next three weeks will shape Northern Ireland's future.

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## **News story: Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice: David Lidington appointed**

I am pleased and honoured to have been appointed as Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice.

Together with my ministerial team, I look forward to working with the hardworking and dedicated staff in our prisons and probation services, in our courts and tribunals and with people right across the justice system.

Democracy and freedom are built on the rule of law, and are protected by a strong and independent judiciary. I look forward to taking my Oath as Lord Chancellor, and to working with the Lord Chief Justice and his fellow judges in the months ahead, to ensure that justice is fairly administered and robustly defended.

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## [News story: PM call with Taoiseach Enda Kenny: 11 June 2017](#)

Prime Minister Theresa May spoke on the phone to Taoiseach Enda Kenny today. The Prime Minister explained that she is working towards a confidence and supply deal with the DUP which would provide stability and certainty for the UK going forward.

They confirmed their joint commitment to restoring a Northern Ireland Executive as soon as possible and agreed that both countries would continue to engage closely to bring about political stability in Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister reiterated that the government's approach and objectives in the forthcoming talks to re-establish the Northern Ireland Executive remained unchanged.

The 2 leaders spoke about their willingness to continue close cooperation as the UK embarks on leaving the European Union, with no return to a hard border.

The Prime Minister thanked Mr Kenny for helping to make UK-Ireland relations stronger than ever, wished him well for the future and said she looked forward to continuing a close relationship with his successor.

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## [News story: PM call with Chancellor Merkel: 10 June 2017](#)

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The German Chancellor Angela Merkel called the Prime Minister earlier today to offer her congratulations.

The Prime Minister confirmed her intention for Brexit talks to begin as planned in the next couple of weeks and that we would be looking for a reciprocal agreement on the rights of EU citizens and British citizens abroad at an early stage.

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## News story: PM calls with Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand: 10 June 2017

The Prime Minister has taken two further telephone calls today from other world leaders.

The Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull called to congratulate the Prime Minister. They agreed the UK and Australia were close partners, and would continue to stand together, particularly in the fight against terrorism which was a shared threat facing us all. The Prime Minister offered her sincere condolences over the two Australians killed in the London Bridge attack, and over the police injuries sustained in the recent Melbourne attack.

New Zealand's Prime Minister Bill English called the Prime Minister to offer his congratulations. The Prime Minister said she was very sorry that a New Zealander had been injured in the London Bridge terrorist attack. They agreed they looked forward to continuing to work together as close partners.