

Appointment of Baroness Gisela Stuart to the post of First Civil Service Commissioner

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has today confirmed Baroness Stuart of Edgbaston as the new First Civil Service Commissioner.

Baroness Stuart served as a Labour Member of Parliament from 1997 until 2017. During her twenty years in Parliament, she worked as a government minister in 1999-2001, sat on the Security and Intelligence Committee and chaired Vote Leave in 2016.

From 2017, Baroness Stuart has contributed to public life with non-partisan roles. This includes roles at the Royal Mint, Birmingham City University and as the lead Non Executive Board Member at the Cabinet Office. Baroness Stuart now sits as a Crossbench Peer where she operates independently, outside of a party-political framework.

The appointment follows a fair and open recruitment process following the requirements of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010. Pre-appointment scrutiny by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) took place and the Committee published its report endorsing the appointment.

Following the recommendations of the last review of the Civil Service Commission, the criteria for appointment emphasised the need to act independently of the Civil Service and for a broad range of experiences from outside of Civil Service roles. Candidates were also required to demonstrate how they would uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Ian Watmore stepped down as First Civil Service Commissioner on 30 September 2021 as his five-year, non-renewable term ended. In the interim, the Prime Minister had authorised Rosie Glazebrook to carry out the functions of First Commissioner from 1 October 2021 until the vacancy was filled.

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said:

I am delighted to confirm that Baroness Stuart is now appointed to the role of First Civil Service Commissioner. Baroness Stuart has all the attributes, experience and independence of judgement needed to lead the Civil Service Commission highly effectively.

I would like to thank Rosie Glazebrook for carrying out the functions of the office so effectively while we undertook the recruitment process.

I am also grateful to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee for carrying out pre-appointment scrutiny to

provide additional assurance to this process and thank them for their report.

Baroness Stuart, the new First Civil Service Commissioner, said:

I am honoured to be appointed as First Civil Service Commissioner. I look forward to leading the important work of the Civil Service Commission in upholding the impartiality of the Civil Service, and ensuring that we have a highly skilled and diverse Civil Service that can deliver effectively for the citizens of the United Kingdom".

In the role of First Civil Service Commissioner, Baroness Stuart will lead the Civil Service Commission.

Following the preferred candidate announcement on 9th December, Baroness Stuart stepped down as the Cabinet Office Lead Non-Executive Board Member.

In addition to the First Civil Service Commissioner, the Civil Service Commission is currently composed of ten Commissioners.

The Civil Service Commission is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Cabinet Office. The Civil Service Commission exists to provide assurance that civil servants are selected on merit on the basis of fair and open competition; and to help safeguard an impartial Civil Service.

The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee held a hearing with Baroness Gisela Stuart on 3rd February 2022 where they asked a range of questions including about motivation to apply, how she would ensure impartiality and independence of the Commission and balancing this role with her other responsibilities.

The PACAC report was [published online on 7 February](#) and it endorsed the appointment of Baroness Stuart to the role.

[Invocation of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism to address Russia's invasion of Ukraine: UK statement](#)

Mr Chair, I wish to make some additional remarks in my national capacity to supplement the [joint statement delivered by Canada](#) on behalf of 45 participating States, including the UK.

The United Kingdom strongly supports the joint decision to invoke the Moscow Mechanism. We have grave concerns about the humanitarian impacts of Russia's invasion and the potential for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We mentioned in our statement earlier today just some of the many heinous incidents that have already occurred since the start of Russia's unprovoked, premeditated and entirely unjustifiable invasion.

We spoke of the Russian government's disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas. The bombardment of Ukrainian villages, towns and cities. The use of heavy artillery in densely populated areas causing civilian casualties. A number of these attacks have also affected critical civilian infrastructure. The schools and kindergartens which have been damaged, and residential buildings which have been destroyed. The horrific loss of civilian life.

Mr Chair, The actions Russia has chosen to take in Ukraine is having severe and far-reaching consequences. It is important that the mission that is being invoked today establishes the facts and circumstances of what Russia is unleashing on Ukraine, and that information or documentation derived from that mission is delivered to other appropriate accountability mechanisms, as well as national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in the future have, jurisdiction.

Mr Chair, Russia will be held to account for its actions.

Invocation of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism to address Russia's invasion of Ukraine: joint statement

Thank you very much Mr Chair, I am delivering this statement on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union Member States, and Canada.

Today, our delegations will send the following letter to Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Director Matteo Mecacci, invoking the Moscow Mechanism, with the support of Ukraine, in light of our grave concerns regarding the humanitarian impacts of Russia's invasion and potential for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Director Mecacci,

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation, with the support of Belarus, launched an invasion to wage war against Ukraine. This further invasion took place against the backdrop of ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine that has, since 2014, violated Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

The delegations of Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, following bilateral consultations with Ukraine under the Vienna (Human Dimension) Mechanism, are invoking [the Moscow \(Human Dimension\) Mechanism](#) under Paragraph 8 of that document. We request that the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) inquire of Ukraine whether it would invite a mission of experts to address the human rights and humanitarian impacts of the Russian Federation's invasion and acts of war, supported by Belarus, on the people of Ukraine, within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

The mission of experts, if Ukraine agrees, could be tasked, inter alia, to undertake the following:

- establish the facts and circumstances surrounding possible contraventions of OSCE commitments, and violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law
- establish the facts and circumstances of possible cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including due to deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure; and to collect, consolidate, and analyze this information with a view to presenting it to relevant accountability mechanisms, as well as national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in future have, jurisdiction

We also request that, should Ukraine agree to a mission of experts, ODIHR provide any relevant information or documentation derived from that mission to other appropriate accountability mechanisms, as well as national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in future have, jurisdiction.

Thank you Mr Chair, and I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Speech UN Human Rights Council 49: UK statement during the Urgent Debate on Ukraine

Mr President, High Commissioner Bachelet, Colleagues,

We, the peoples of the United Nations, meet at a moment of unprecedented threat to the very principles upon which this Organisation was forged: to save ourselves from the scourge of war and protect human rights around the globe. It is essential that we do not turn away.

We have condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine, an unprovoked and premeditated attack against innocent people, and a clear violation of international law.

President Putin lied to the world, staging absurd pretexts and provocations to justify his aggression. Now, civilians all over Ukraine – women, children – are sheltering as missiles hit their homes. Many have already lost their lives. Hundreds of thousands more have been forced to leave their homes, their families, and their livelihoods, to escape Russia's onslaught.

There are multiple allegations of human rights violations and war crimes as a result of Russia's military action.

It is unconscionable to think that a fellow member of the Human Rights Council, a nation that fought courageously with us to defeat fascism, would commit these egregious violations. But President Putin has proved that he has no respect for human rights, the UN Charter, or international law.

That is why it is essential that this Council establishes a Commission of Inquiry, to investigate alleged abuses and violations of human rights, and violations of international humanitarian law, preserve evidence and prevent impunity. Russia must be held to account for its campaign of destruction.

And we must condemn Russia's actions in the strongest possible terms today – as 141 of us did in the General Assembly yesterday. We call on our fellow Council members to stand by our shared values and support Ukraine's draft resolution, and we encourage all Member States to join us in cosponsoring.

The UK stands with the people of Ukraine in this moment of agony. We salute their bravery and determination as they defend their country and their freedom. We will always support their right to choose their own destiny.

Slava Ukraini.

Foreign Secretary's opening statement at a press conference with Baltic Foreign Ministers, 3 March 2022

Thank you, Minister Landsbergis, for bringing us together here together in Vilnius.

The United Kingdom stands with our allies in doing all we can to support Ukraine against President Putin's war of choice. We must ensure Putin fails in this horrific enterprise and his ambitions go no further.

We were pleased to support Lithuania's leadership referring war crimes to the ICC.

I'm here today in Vilnius with our Baltic friends, because I want to say that the UK's commitment to Baltics and to Article 5 are unyielding.

Our Baltic friends know what's at stake, having long lived in the shadow of Russian aggression, and I admire your courage. We are working together to deliver two clear objectives.

First, Putin must lose in Ukraine. We are helping Ukraine to defend itself. Our defensive weapons from the United Kingdom are now being used to stop Russian tanks. But we need to do more.

Secondly, we must contain this aggression. We are reinforcing NATO's Eastern flank and supporting European security through the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force.

We are here in the Baltic Region – we lead and have doubled our enhanced forward presence in Estonia. Our allies are leading troops across the Baltics. British military intelligence are working with Lithuania's military to enhance border defences, including in the Suwalki Gap. 200 troops are doing joint military exercises right now, and we are working together on maritime security.

At the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting tomorrow, we will be working together to strengthen our collective defence in the light of the changed security situation across Europe. In terms of supporting Ukraine with defensive weaponry, the United Kingdom was the first European country to give defensive military support to Ukraine – and we are now also supporting with humanitarian aid. We pledged £220 million in aid support to Ukraine – and we are the top European donor. And we will do more.

We have also been on the forefront in tightening the vice on the Kremlin through sanctions, and it is vital at this juncture that we keep the foot on gas.

We have worked with the EU, the US and the G7 to cut off funding for Putin's

war machine, kicking Russian banks out of the financial system.

We have also shut our airspace to Russian planes, and we are fast-forwarding sanctions against Russian oligarchs, but we need to go further.

We need to make sure no Russian bank has access to SWIFT, and we need to go further on reducing dependency on hydrocarbons from Russia, including oil, gas and coal. We have also launched sanctions against Belarus for aiding and abetting aggression.

I will be raising these issues at the G7 tomorrow and also at the European Union Foreign Affairs Council, alongside the US, Canada and Ukraine, who have also been invited in these extraordinary circumstances.

This is a struggle not just for Ukraine's freedom and self-determination, but for all of our freedom and security. By continuing to respond with strength, we will together ensure that Putin loses.

And we stand with our brave allies here in the Baltics to do just that.