

News story: Defence dialogue on our EU exit

Minister for Exiting the European Union David Jones and Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin took part in a roundtable with the UK's defence business leaders today (Thursday, 2 March) ahead of the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Attendees discussed topics including: tariffs and customs arrangements; skills and movement of employees; research and development funding; and common standards – with an aim of exploiting the opportunities provided by our EU exit.

Participants were also keen to explore how we could further shape our own economy – such as delivering a bold, long term industrial strategy that builds on the UK's strengths – and fully develop our immense trade and investment potential.

Minister for Exiting the European Union, David Jones, said:

The UK is a leader in defence technology and one of the world's largest defence exporters. We are determined that this industry, which is worth more than nine billion pounds to the UK each year, will continue to thrive after our departure from the EU.

Today's meeting has been an excellent opportunity to engage with some of the leading defence industry figures and to discuss opportunities, and priorities, ahead of the EU withdrawal negotiations. I look forward to continuing this dialogue throughout our negotiations.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Harriett Baldwin, said:

Supported by our rising defence budget and £178 billion Equipment Plan, defence businesses deliver highly skilled, high wage jobs and drive innovation across the UK. We are determined that the UK defence industry will continue to thrive after we leave the EU.

The event, which was organised by the ADS Group and hosted by Rolls-Royce, provided participants with the opportunity to discuss priorities for the defence sector which employs 142,000 people, is worth around £9.4 billion to the UK economy annually and exports around £7.7 billion pounds of goods and services per year.

The Ministers were joined by senior board-level executives from the following businesses and trade associations:

- ADS
- Airbus
- Babcock
- BAE Systems
- Boeing
- Leonardo MW
- Lockheed Martin UK
- Marshalls
- MBDA UK
- QinetiQ
- Raytheon
- Rolls-Royce
- Serco
- TechUK
- Thales UK

It was the latest in a series of roundtables and other engagement activities the government is having with business leaders and key stakeholders up and down the country.

By listening to industry experts' views and discussing opportunities, we are seeking to create certainty in the transition and ensure a new relationship with the EU that works for businesses and Britain.

Direct Benefit Transfer in Fertilizer Sector

Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Shipping, Road Transport & Highways, Shri Mansukh L. Mandaviya, in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today, said that the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) being implemented in fertilizer subsidy payment is slightly different from the normal DBT being implemented in LPG subsidy.

WCD Ministry holds national consultation to discuss issues related to India's accession to Hague

[Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction](#)

The Ministry of Women and Child Development held a National Consultation to discuss issues related to India's accession to Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, in New Delhi today. The consultation was chaired by the Minister of Women and Child Development, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi.

[UN-backed narcotics control body calls for more policies to address drug dependence among women](#)

2 March 2017 – Citing a significant rise over the past year in the number of women dying from drug overdoses globally, the independent expert body which monitors Governments' compliance with the United Nations international drug control treaties is today calling for the implementation of gender-sensitive drug policies and programmes.

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) said that women and girls comprise one-third of global drug users yet are only one-fifth of those receiving treatment, as significant systemic, structural, social, cultural and personal barriers affect women's ability to access substance abuse treatment..

Further, they are also more likely to be prescribed narcotics and anti-anxiety medication than men, and are thus more likely to abuse these medications.

For example, Germany and Serbia have reported that fatal overdoses from prescription drugs are more frequent among women. Additionally, countries such as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have seen larger increases in overdoses, of all substances, among women than among men.

These are among the key findings in the 2016 Annual Report launched today by the INCB. It stresses that Governments should prioritize providing health care for drug-dependent women, in addition to more funding and coordination to prevent and treat drug abuse among women.

"We want to change perceptions and remind people, particularly policymakers, of the importance of protecting the rights of women who use drugs or who have committed drug-related offences and the rights of their families," said the

organization's President, Werner Sipp, in a news release.

The report also highlights the importance of targeting prevention programmes to specific populations, such as prisoners, pregnant women, people living with HIV/AIDS, and sex workers.

It notes that women prisoners and sex workers are at "particular risk" of drug use.

Countries are also encouraged to seek alternatives to imprisonment for drug-related offences, such as treatment, rehabilitation and social integration.

The INCB also repeated its longstanding call for countries to abolish the death penalty for drug-related offences.

Among its other observations, the Board noted with "great concern" recent reports in some countries of the targeting of individuals suspected of involvement in drug-related activity, including drug use, who have been subjected to violent acts of reprisal and murder at the hands of law enforcement personnel and members of the civilian population.

In some instances, those acts have been committed with the expressed or tacit approval, or even encouragement, of political forces and, in many cases, have gone unpunished, said the Board, emphasizing that it condemned such practices, including the extrajudicial targeting of persons suspected of drug use, "in the strongest possible terms," and denounced them as a "serious violation of human rights [...] and an affront to the most basic standards of human dignity."

President to open Rashtrapati Bhavan's annual 'Udyanotsav' tomorrow

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee will open the annual 'Udyanotsav' of the Rashtrapati Bhavan tomorrow (February 04, 2017).