

News story: UK and Jordan standing shoulder to shoulder in fight against Daesh

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As a country on the front line in the fight against Daesh, Jordan is working closely with Britain and other Coalition members to defeat the terror group. Jordan was one of the earliest contributors to airstrikes against Daesh, operating four F-16 fighters, as well as other transporter aircraft.

Following the meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Jordan is a longstanding and key ally of the UK and an important partner in countering the shared threats we face.

We stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against Daesh, our militaries exercise together and we're assisting Jordan in the development to develop of its armed forces.

Through our global role we're committed to helping Jordan in sustaining its stability which in turn makes Britain safer and more secure.

Over the last financial year, the UK, through our Conflict Security and Stabilisation Fund (CSSF), has contributed over £32 million in helping Jordan's security, and next year we will aim to contribute a further £28 million. This funding, as well as longstanding defence engagement between the two countries, means that the UK and Jordan have a substantial defence relationship, including:

- Building up Jordan's border security, through helping develop their border surveillance capability.
- 200 UK forces last year participated in Exercise Shamal Storm 16, and this year British forces will work alongside a stepped up Jordanian force.
- The UK leads and helps to fund Jordan's Quick Reaction Force (QRF). The QRF is a Rapid Response force which has the ability to respond to threats at distance.
- Through NATO, Britain is providing financial support to developing

Jordan's cyber defence, military exercises and information protection.

[News story: UK and Jordan standing shoulder to shoulder in fight against Daesh](#)

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Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon has praised the crucial role Jordan plays in the fight against Daesh, following a meeting today with His Majesty King Abdullah II.

During a visit to London, where the King also met with the Foreign Secretary, Sir Michael discussed the UK's deep and longstanding support to Jordan, an important regional ally.

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[Speech: PM press conference with US President Donald Trump: 27 January 2017](#)

President Trump

Thank you very much. I am honoured to have Prime Minister Theresa May here for our first official visit from a foreign leader. This is our first visit, so, great honour. The special relationship between our 2 countries has been one of the great forces in history for justice and for peace and by the way, my mother was born in Scotland, Stornoway, which is serious Scotland.

Today the United States renews our deep bond with Britain – military, financial, cultural and political – we have one of the great bonds. We pledge our lasting support to this most special relationship. Together, America and the United Kingdom are a beacon for prosperity and the rule of law. That is why the United States respects the sovereignty of the British people and their right of self-determination.

A free and independent Britain is a blessing to the world and our relationship has never been stronger. Both America and Britain understand that governments must be responsive to everyday working people, that governments must represent their own citizens.

Madam Prime Minister, we look forward to working closely with you as we strengthen our mutual ties in commerce, business and foreign affairs. Great days lie ahead for our two peoples and our two countries. On behalf of our

nation, I thank you for joining us here today as a really great honour. Thank you very much.

Prime Minister

Thank you very much, Mr President and can I start by saying that I'm so pleased that I've been able to be here today and thank you for inviting me so soon after your inauguration. And I'm delighted to be able to congratulate you on what was a stunning election victory.

And as you say, the invitation is an indication of the strength and importance of the special relationship that exists between our two countries, a relationship based on the bonds of history, of family, kinship and common interests. And in a further sign of importance in that relationship, I have today been able to convey her Majesty, the Queen's hope that President Trump and the First Lady would pay a state visit to the United Kingdom later this year, and I'm delighted that the President has accepted that invitation.

Now, today we're discussing a number of topics and there's much on which we agree. The President has mentioned foreign policy; we're discussing how we can work even more closely together in order to take on and defeat Daesh and the ideology of Islamistic extremism, wherever it's found.

Our 2 nations are already leading efforts to face up to this challenge and we're making progress with Daesh losing territory and fighters, but we need to redouble our efforts. And today, we're discussing how we can do this by deepening intelligence and security cooperation and critically, by stepping up our efforts to counter Daesh in cyber space, because we know we will not eradicate this threat until we defeat the idea – the ideology that lies behind it.

Our talks will be continuing later. I'm sure we'll discuss other topics – Syria and Russia. On defence and security cooperation, we're united in our recognition of NATO as the bulwark of our collective defence, and today, we've reaffirmed our unshakeable commitment to this alliance.

Mr President, I think you said, confirmed that you were 100% behind NATO. But we're also discussing the importance of NATO continuing to ensure it is as equipped to fight terrorism and cyber warfare as it is to fight more conventional forms of war. And I've agreed to continue my efforts to encourage my fellow European leaders to deliver on their commitments to spend 2% of their GDP on defence so that the burden is more fairly shared. It's only by investing properly in our defence that we can ensure we're properly equipped to face our shared challenges together.

And finally, the President and I have mentioned future economic cooperation and trade, trade between our two countries is already worth over £150 billion a year. The US is the single biggest source of inward investment into the UK, and together we've around \$1 trillion invested in each other's economies, and the UK-US defence relationship is the broadest, deepest and most advanced of any two countries, sharing military hardware and expertise.

And I think the President and I are ambitious to build on this relationship in order to grow our respective economies, provide the high-skilled, high paid jobs as a future for working people across America and across the UK, and so, we are discussing how we can establish trade negotiation agreement, take forward immediate high level talks, lay the groundwork for UK-US trade agreement and identify the practical steps we can take now in order to enable companies in both countries to trade and do business with one another more easily.

And I'm convinced that a trade deal between the US and the UK is in the national interest of both countries and will cement the crucial relationship that exists between us, particularly as the UK leaves the European Union and reaches out to the world.

Today's talks, I think, are a significant moment for President Trump and I to build our relationship and I look forward to continuing to work with you as we deliver on the promises of freedom and prosperity for all the people of our respective countries. Thank you.

President Trump

Thank you very much, that's very nicely stated.

Question

You're going to be speaking tomorrow with the Russian president. What message would you like to convey to him? How close are you to lifting some of the sanctions imposed on Russia over its Ukraine encouragement? What would you expect in return and, Prime Minister May, do you foresee any changes in British attitudes towards sanctions on Russia?

President Trump

Well, I hear a call was set up, and we'll see what happens. As far as the sanctions, very early to be talking about that, but we look to have a great relationship with all countries, ideally. That won't necessarily happen, unfortunately, it probably won't happen with many countries, but if we can have as we do with Prime Minister May and the relationship that we've all developed and even in the short relationship that we've just developed just by being with each other – we're going to have lunch and we've really had some very interesting talks and very productive talks – but if we can have a great relationship with Russia and with China and with all countries, I'm all for that. That would be a tremendous asset. No guarantees, but if we can, that would be a positive, not a negative. Okay?

Prime Minister

We have – as far as the UK is concerned on sanctions for Russia in relation to their activities in the Ukraine, we have been very clear that we want to see the Minsk agreement fully implemented. We believe the sanctions should

continue until we see that Minsk agreement fully implemented and we've been continuing to argue that inside the European Union.

Question

Prime Minister, you've talked about where you agree, but you have also said that you would be frank where you disagree with the President. Can you tell us where in our talks you did disagree? And do you think that the President listened to what you had to say?

Mr President, you've said before that torture works, you've praised Russia, you've said you want to ban some Muslims from coming to America, you've suggested there should be punishment for abortion. For many people in Britain, those sound like alarming beliefs. What do you say to our viewers at home who are worried about some of your views and worried about you becoming the leader of the free world?

President Trump

This was your choice of a question? There goes that relationship.

Prime Minister

On the issue that you raised with me, can I confirm that the President – I've been listening to the President, and the President has been listening to me. That's the point of having a conversation and a dialogue. And we have been discussing a number of topics. We'll carry on after this press conference meeting and discussing a number of other topics. And there will be times when we disagree and issues on which we disagree. The point of the special relationship is that we are able to have that open and frank discussion so that we are able to make that clear when it happens.

But I'm clear also that there are many issues on which the United Kingdom and the United States stand alongside one another – many issues on which we agree. And I think as I said yesterday in my speech that we are at a moment now when we can build an even stronger special relationship which will be in the interest not just of the UK and the United States but actually in the interests of the wider world as well.

President Trump

All right ma'am. We have a great general who has just been appointed Secretary of Defence, General James Mattis, and he has stated publicly that he does not necessarily believe in torture or waterboarding, or however you want to define it – enhanced interrogation, I guess, would be a word that a lot of – words that a lot of people would like to use. I don't necessarily agree, but I would tell you that he will override, because I'm giving him that power. He's an expert. He's highly respected. He's the general's general – got through the Senate very, very quickly, which in this country is not easy I will tell you. And so I'm going to rely on him. I happen to feel that

it does work. I've been open about that for a long period of time, but I am going with our leaders. And we're going to win with or without, but I do disagree.

As far as, again, Putin and Russia, I don't say good, bad or indifferent. I don't know the gentleman. I hope we have a fantastic relationship. That's possible, and it's also possible that we won't. We will see what happens. I will be representing the American people very, very strongly – very forcefully and if we have a great relationship with Russia and other countries, and if we go after ISIS together, which has to be stopped. That's an evil that has to be stopped. I will consider that a good thing, not a bad thing.

How the relationship works out, I won't be able to tell you that later. I've had many times where I thought I'd get along with people, and I don't like them at all. And I've had some where I didn't think I was going to have much of a relationship, and it turned out to be a great relationship. So, Theresa, we never know about those things – do we? But, I will tell you one thing, I'll be representing the American people very strongly. Thank you.

Question

Mr President, thank you so much – Madam Prime Minister. It's my understanding Mr President that you had an hour-long phone call this morning with President Enrique Pena Nieto of Mexico. Could we get an update on where the relationship is? Further to that, what do you say to your critics who claim that you've already soured a relationship with a very important US ally? And Madam Prime Minister, if I may ask you as well, are you concerned about the state of relations between the United States and Mexico?

President Trump

Well, I think the Prime Minister, first of all has other things that she's much more worried about than Mexico and the United States' relationship. But I will say that we had a very good call. I have been very strong on Mexico. I have great respect for Mexico. I love the Mexican people. I work with the Mexican people all the time – great relationships. But as you know, Mexico with the United States has out-negotiated us and beat us to a pulp through our past leaders. They've made us look foolish. We have a trade deficit of \$60 billion with Mexico. On top of that the border is soft and weak, drugs are pouring in and I'm not going to let that happen. And General Kelly is going to do a fantastic job at Homeland Security. As you know, we swore him in yesterday.

We have a really – I think – a very good relationship the President and I, and we had a talk that lasted for about an hour this morning. And we are going to be working on a fair relationship and a new relationship. But the United States cannot continue to lose vast amounts of business, vast amounts of companies and millions and millions of people losing their jobs. That won't happen with me. We're no longer going to be the country that doesn't know what it's doing. And so, we are going to renegotiate our trade deals and

we are going to renegotiate other aspects of our relationship with Mexico. And in the end, I think it will be good for both countries.

But it was a very, very friendly call. I think you'll hear that from the President, and I think you'll hear that from the people of Mexico that really represent him and represent him very well. And I look forward to over the coming months, we'll be negotiating and we'll see what happens. But I'm representing the people of the United States, and I'm going to represent them as somebody should represent them – not how they've been represented in the past where we lose to every single country.

Prime Minister

As the President himself has said, the relationship of the United States with Mexico is a matter for the United States and Mexico.

Question

Mr President you said you would help us with a Brexit trade deal. You said you'd stand by us with NATO, but how can the British Prime Minister believe you, because you have been known in the past to change your position on things? And also may I ask a question to both of you – people are fascinated to know how you're going to get on with each other. You're so different. The hard-working daughter of a vicar, the brash TV extrovert – have you found anything in common personally yet?

President Trump

Actually, I'm not as brash as you might think. And I can tell you that I think we're going to get along very well. You know, I've – interesting because I am a people person. I think you are also Theresa. And I can often tell how I get along with someone very early, and I believe we're going to have a fantastic relationship.

Brexit – and I really don't change my position very much. If you go back and you look, my position on trade has been solid for many, many years – since I was a very young person talking about how we were getting ripped off by the rest of the world. And I never knew I'd be in this position where we can actually do something about it. But, we will be talking to your folks about Brexit. Brexit was an example of what was to come, and I happened to be in Scotland at Turnberry cutting a ribbon when Brexit happened. And we had a vast amount of press there. And I said Brexit – this was the day before you probably remember – I said Brexit is going to happen. And I was scorned in the press for making that prediction. I was scorned. And I said I believe it's going to happen, because people want to know who's coming into their country and they want to control their own trade and various other things. And lo and behold the following day, it happened. And the odds weren't looking good for me when I made that statement, because as you know, everybody thought it was not going to happen.

I think Brexit's going to be a wonderful thing for your country. I think when

it irons out, you're going to have your own identity, and you're going to have the people that you want in your country and you're going to be able to make free trade deals without having somebody watching you and what you're doing. And I had a very bad experience. I had something when I was in my other world. I have something in another country, and getting the approvals from Europe was very, very tough. Getting the approvals from the country was fast, easy and efficient. Getting the approvals from the group – I call them the consortium – was very, very tough. But I thought Brexit – I think and I think it'll go down that it will end up being a fantastic thing for the United Kingdom. I think in the end it will be a tremendous asset, not a tremendous liability. Okay.

Prime Minister

And just on the question you asked me. I mean, I think as the President himself has said, I think we have already struck up a good relationship. But you asked what we had in common. I think if you look at the approach that we're both taking, I think one of the things that we have in common is that we want to put the interests of ordinary working people right up there – centre stage. Those people who, you know, they're working all the hours, they're doing their best for their families and sometimes they just feel the odds are stacked against them. And it's that interest in ensuring that what we do, that the economies – our economies and our governments actually work for ordinary working people – work for everyone in our countries. I think we both share that.

President Trump

Thank you very much.

Prime Minister

Thank you.

President Trump

Thank you very much everybody.

[Stage 'gradually being set' for Somalia to move to a new phase in sustaining peace – UN envoy](#)

the United Nations envoy for the country noted today that the recently concluded election was a “mirror” to Somalis, showing them the good and the bad regarding how power is exercised, relations between elders, clan power brokers, politicians, business, ordinary citizens, women and men.

“They do not like everything they have seen, least of all the levels of corruption, and the absence of institutions that can ensure legal and financial accountability,” said Michael Keating, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia.

Mr. Keating’s briefing follows an extended parliamentary electoral process and comes less than two weeks ahead of presidential polls. It also comes against the backdrop of increased Al-Shabaab militancy aiming to disrupt the elections, as evidenced by a series of recent attacks.

Stressing the importance that the last stage of the electoral process is conducted transparently and according to the agreed rules, designed to ensure free and fair elections, he noted: “The election of a President accepted as legitimate by the population and by the international community will set the stage for Somalia to tackle the serious challenges ahead.”

However, he added: “If voting [...] is seen as compromised by corruption, coercion or external interference, then the country could face a protracted period of uncertainty.”

Despite problems, progress thus far ‘very encouraging’ – UN envoy

In his briefing, Mr. Keating, who also heads up the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), told Council members that despite the problems seen in the recently concluded elections, the process also had “very encouraging” outcomes, marking an important milestone in the country’s evolution and post-conflict transformation.



Special Representative and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Michael Keating briefs the Security Council. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

For instance, the number of voters had increased significantly and the electorate was expanded from 2012’s 135 male elders to over 13,000 individuals (30 per cent of them female). It was also particularly notable that almost a quarter of the members of parliament are now female.

“A truly remarkable achievement, the result of effective political mobilization of women, supported by the UN and the international community and some Somali leaders,” noted the Special Representative.

“The new Parliament is younger, more diverse and is likely to be more responsive to the electorate than the previous one. In short, this Parliament is more legitimate and representative than any since the last elections were held in 1969,” he noted.

Humanitarian plight adding to human suffering

Turning to the humanitarian challenges facing the Horn of Africa country, he reported that about five million people are estimated to be in need around the country and an estimated 320,000 under-five-year-olds are acutely malnourished.

“Coping capacities have been eroded to the point of collapse,” he noted.

The week before last, the humanitarian community in Somalia had launched an \$864 million to reach 3.9 million people with urgent life-saving assistance in 2017, \$300 million of this amount is required in the first quarter of this year.

Further, noting the political and security implications of the drought, Mr. Keating said that a perceived inability of the federal and local governments to respond will damage their legitimacy – something that will be exploited by Al-Shabaab.

“In a nutshell, failure to support the drought response could halt and even undermine the pursuit of key state-building and peace-building objectives,” he cautioned.

‘It is the Somalis who will determine their own fate’

Reiterating that progress is fragile and reversible, and fraught with complexity, he said the stage is nevertheless gradually being set for Somalia to move to a new phase in sustaining peace, preventing and resolving violent conflict, and in building a functional, federal State.

“Ultimately, it is the Somalis who will determine their own fate – but your support is central to their chances of success,” he concluded.

[News story: Foreign Secretary condemns terrorist attack in Somalia](#)

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The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Somalia, in which Kenyan military personnel were killed.

The Foreign Secretary said:

I strongly condemn the recent Al Shabaab attacks in Somalia, against the Dayah hotel as well as a Kenyan Defence Force facility at Kulbiyow in Southern Somalia. I offer my deepest condolences to the families of the brave Kenyan soldiers who lost their lives or were injured in the attack.

I would also like to praise the decisive response of the Kenyan Defence Forces, who displayed exemplary levels of bravery in responding to the attack.

The UK continues to work closely with both the governments of Kenya and Somalia in the fight against terrorism. These security challenges represent a shared threat, and require a shared response.

Further information

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