

UK and Nigeria strengthen security and defence partnership to tackle terrorism and build regional security

New commitments made this week at the first ever UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership dialogue will boost work to tackle shared threats and keep both British and Nigerian people safe.

It includes commitments to work together to improve civilian policing standards, protect human rights and recognise the important role of women in achieving sustainable peace.

Further UK support to Nigeria in tackling Islamic State West Africa (ISWA) and Boko Haram will also build on our work together to respond to conflict with extremist groups in the North East of the country.

Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford said:

Conflict and insecurity are leading to the loss of life and increasing displacement of millions of people across West Africa. It affects the freedom of civilians and blocks economic growth, further undermining peace and prosperity.

Through these new agreements, the UK is deepening our partnership with Nigeria to tackle shared threats, bolster regional stabilisation efforts and support Nigeria's peace-keeping capabilities.

This will help Nigeria to tackle violent extremist organisations and organised criminal groups, empowering them to respond to growing regional security challenges.

It is only when people are safe and communities stable, that nations can truly thrive.

This week's dialogue, the first following the agreement of our security and defence partnership in [2018](#), has led to refreshed plans to deepen UK engagement with the Nigerian security authorities.

This is detailed in the [joint communique](#) issued by both countries following the talks.

Nigerian National Security Adviser, Major General Babagana Monguno, said:

Nigeria and the United Kingdom share deep linkages and a common

history dating back to over a century. Like many other countries faced with complex and evolving security threats, Nigeria realises the need to forge greater alliances and partnerships with friendly nations, in order to combat these threats. It is particularly imperative that we work together to combat the threats of modern day terrorism.

The discussions and agreements reached today present an opportunity for officials at the highest levels of both our governments to work together to address threats from terrorism, inter communal conflicts, serious organised crime, piracy, banditry, border security and trafficking in drugs and persons, amongst others.

These agreements will deepen and enhance our security and defence collaboration in order to create a safe and secure environment for all our citizens to thrive.

Policing advisors deployed from the UK to Nigeria will share experiences and help Nigerian forces respond timely and appropriately to criminal activity across the country.

In addition, there will be UK support to Nigeria as they roll-out community policing in several states. This will help improve civilian security and allow the Nigerian army, which is currently performing many policing duties across the country, to focus its efforts on fighting terrorism.

The two sides also discussed a review of regulations to strengthen the role of women in crime prevention and equal treatment of men and women of the police force.

Alongside work to strengthen Nigeria's security and respond to growing regional insecurity, both countries agreed to deepen direct engagement on human rights, through sharing UK expertise with the Nigerian military on International Humanitarian Law and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

On top of this, the UK and Nigeria discussed UK assistance on reintegration pathways to civilian life for individuals who have left extremist groups.

The two sides discussed Nigeria's recent work to improve protection for children in conflict zones, efforts to improve human rights and accountability within the military and Nigeria's role in regional responses to shared insecurity challenges.

Notes to Editors:

- The UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership was agreed between the two countries in 2018.
- The Security and Defence Partnership Dialogue this week was the first such dialogue since the partnership was formed.
- The full joint communique can be read [here](#)