

UK announces £9m project to support independent media in Ukraine

Foreign Office Minister of State Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon will today (Tuesday 2 July) announce that the UK is supporting independent media in Ukraine and the wider region through a new £9million three year project, as he attends the Ukraine Reform Conference in Canada. The announcement comes ahead of the first Global Media Freedom Conference in London next week.

The Minister is attending the third Ukraine Reform Conference, which is being hosted by Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland in Toronto. The UK launched and hosted the first Ukraine Reform Conference in London in 2017. The UK and Canada continue to lead the international community's support for crucial reforms in Ukraine, and will press for further progress in judicial, electoral and economic reforms at the Conference. It is critical that Ukraine continues to engage with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), EU and other donors to complete these reforms.

The UK is committing more than £37million over the next year to support Ukraine's wider reform, defence, peacebuilding, anti-corruption and humanitarian efforts, and empowerment and equality of women.

At the Conference this afternoon, Lord Ahmad is expected to say:

In the last five years, Ukraine has made more progress than in the previous 23 combined. We now see a coordinated plan of reforms across government. We see a more transparent procurement system, a reformed banking sector, better healthcare, and more decentralised decision-making that is closer to the people. Against a backdrop of relentless Russian aggression, this is a quite remarkable achievement.

We must remain focussed on fundamental reforms: first, reform of the judiciary; second, a well-designed privatisation programme; third, legislation to dismantle monopolies; and, fourth, reforms to media ownership that ensure a free and fair press.

As the UK leaves the European Union, our Government is convinced that Ukraine's success is vital to European and international security. We will continue to work with all of you for a sovereign, secure and prosperous Ukraine.

On announcing the new project to support independent media in Ukraine, he will say:

Today I can announce that we are also stepping up our support for independent media in Ukraine through a new £9m project which will

strengthen societal resilience to disinformation and help increase Government accountability by developing independent sources of information in Ukraine and across the Eastern Partnership countries.

The UK is clear that a thriving independent media environment, which includes public service broadcasting, is the bedrock of a stable, successful democracy. Independent media can be a powerful tool to dull the impact of malign narratives that seek to sow discord and disrupt reform efforts.

Further information