

Overcoming the silos of UN system for UN conflict prevention

Thank you, Mr President. And thank you to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, to Ambassador Kelapile from ECOSOC and to Judge Donaghue for your briefings.

In 2016, this Council and the General Assembly adopted a pair of groundbreaking resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. What these resolutions did was acknowledge explicitly and for the first time that conflict prevention was the responsibility of the entire UN system.

Building on our collective recognition that development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, these resolutions envisioned a more integrated and coherent UN approach to preventing conflict.

As we've heard today, making this a reality is still a work in progress – as the 2020 UN Peacebuilding Architecture Review also reminded us. And we warmly welcome the Secretary-General's prioritisation of peace in Our Common Agenda.

Mr President, I have three points:

Firstly, a system-wide approach to sustaining peace is critical. By the time an issue reaches the Security Council, it may be too late for many on the frontline of the receiving end of conflict. Peace needs to be a core consideration of the wider UN architecture. The Peacebuilding Commission is obviously key but we can do more to realise the PBC's full potential as well as we've heard today of the roles of other UN bodies.

In this, the Human Rights architecture is particularly important. And those who hide behind arguments about mandates and competencies to maintain that human rights have no bearing on peace and security would do well to revisit the UN Charter. Moreover, as we see, human rights violations are often an early indicator of conflict, and human rights diplomacy is a key part of preventive diplomacy.

Second, peace needs embedding more firmly into the work of UN bodies concerned with development. Development may be the best form of conflict prevention. But, as we have said before, development done poorly is not the "master key to unlocking all problems."

For development to be sustainable, it needs simultaneously to address issues that we know often drive conflict, including economic, social and political exclusion.

Thirdly, Mr President, as your concept note states, an international order based on the rule of law is indispensable for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. That includes this Council holding governments to account when they disregard international treaties, especially when this involves serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

For the United Kingdom, this also means promoting open societies, good governance and the rule of law at the national level. Combatting corruption and ensuring that people have access to justice and security can be important steps in preventing conflict.

To conclude, Mr President, overcoming the silos of the UN system is critical for UN conflict prevention. The United Kingdom is committed to realising the promise of the 2016 “twin resolutions”, and we are grateful to you Mr President for this timely debate and I thank you.

[Joint statement by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace and Ukraine Defence Minister Oleksii Yuriyovych Reznikov](#)

Press release

A joint statement during the visit of Defence Secretary Ben Wallace to Ukraine on 16 November 2021.



Secretary of State for Defence, the Right Honourable Ben Wallace MP and Ukraine Defence Minister Oleksii Yuriyovych Reznikov said:

Ukraine and the United Kingdom are strategic partners in security and defence.

Last week, an Intergovernmental Framework Agreement was signed in London. This document continues progress on joint projects to develop the capabilities of the Naval Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as agreed in June when the UK, Ukraine and industry signed a Memorandum of Implementation to collaborate to boost Ukraine’s naval capabilities.

Today's meeting is the next stage in bilateral cooperation for enhancing Ukraine's defence capabilities and increasing interoperability.

Our governments have no desire to be adversarial, or seek in any way to strategically encircle or undermine the Russian Federation. We are concerned by Russia's military build-up and activity around the borders of Ukraine.

Ukraine's national sovereignty and territorial integrity is indisputable.

The United Kingdom stands shoulder to shoulder with the people of Ukraine and will continue its long-standing determination to support them.

We are unwavering in that support and together we remain vigilant and united in the defence of our common values and freedoms.

Published 16 November 2021

[Reaffirmed Commitment to Reforming the Security Council](#)

Mr President

May I join others in congratulating Ambassador Al-Thani of Qatar and Ambassador Hermann of Denmark on their appointment as Co-Facilitators of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform. We are grateful to them for taking up this important responsibility and look forward to working with them in supporting and reinvigorating this process.

Today, I reaffirm the United Kingdom's strong commitment to reforming the Security Council. The world has changed immeasurably since the Security Council's establishment in 1946 and its most recent expansion in 1965. The Council must change too, to better reflect the world as we find it in the twenty first century, and to better respond to the threats to international peace and security that confront us.

Our position is well known, and is unchanged. The United Kingdom supports modest expansion of the Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

We support the creation of new permanent seats for India, Germany, Japan and Brazil, as well as permanent African representation on the Council.

We also support a modest expansion of the non-permanent category of membership, taking the Security Council's total membership to somewhere in the mid-twenties.

These changes, we believe, would make for a more representative Security Council, better able to address challenges to international peace and security by drawing on the perspectives and the expertise of a wider range of the UN membership.

And, vitally, it is a model for reform that would preserve the Council's ability to respond nimbly and decisively to threats around the globe.

Mr President

On the question of the veto, the United Kingdom has long maintained that disagreement in this area should not prevent progress in other areas where reform is possible.

For our own part, the United Kingdom has not exercised our right to use the veto since 1989. As supporters of the Accountability Coherence and Transparency group Code of Conduct, we remain committed not to vote against a credible draft resolution on timely and decisive action preventing or ending a mass atrocity, and we encourage all States, including other permanent members of the Council, to join with us in this regard.

Mr President

Before concluding, I will turn briefly to the upcoming Intergovernmental Negotiations of this session.

We remain fully committed to the Intergovernmental Negotiations process as a valuable mechanism for Member States to take the discussion on Security Council reform forwards. We will be engaging fully in the forthcoming discussions.

Nevertheless, as we have set out a number of times over the years, we continue to sympathise with those Member States that express concern and frustration over the lack of progress towards a substantive outcome.

We call for the initiation of text-based negotiations with the aim of achieving concrete outcomes within a fixed timeframe. And we remain open to all ideas for moving the process forward at an accelerated rate, including by formalising and recording the Intergovernmental Negotiations.

Mr President,

We look forward to working this year towards fulfilling our collective commitment to "instil new life" in the Security Council reform process.

Thank you.

PM meeting with PM Mitsotakis of Greece: 16 November 2021

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson welcomed Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis to Downing Street.



The Prime Minister welcomed Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis to Downing Street today.

The leaders began by emphasising the value of the UK-Greek relationship as we mark the 200th anniversary of Greece's war of independence. They agreed to work to strengthen it further in areas including trade, education and tourism. The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Mitsotakis welcomed the fact that our countries' vaccine rollouts have enabled travel to resume between the UK and Greece.

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Mitsotakis welcomed the success of the COP26 Summit and the ambitious international commitments to reach net zero carbon emissions. They discussed the important role technology such as wind power can play in providing clean and renewable sources of energy.

The Prime Minister raised his concerns with the current implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol by the EU. He stressed that there are still significant gaps between our positions and that it remains our preference to find a consensual way forward.

The leaders discussed a number of other issues including the situation in Cyprus, Libya and their shared concern about Bosnia and Herzegovina. On Cyprus, both leaders agreed on the importance of all parties working together to reach a lasting settlement.

Finally, Prime Minister Mitsotakis raised the issue of the Parthenon Sculptures. The Prime Minister said that he understood the strength of

feeling of the Greek people on this issue, but reiterated the UK's longstanding position that this matter is one for the trustees of the British Museum. The leaders agreed that this issue in no way affects the strength of the UK-Greece partnership.

Published 16 November 2021

Banks must seize opportunities of climate crisis, says EA Chief

Banks around the world have been warned not to fight against the winds of change from COP26 and to seize the massive investment opportunities of tackling the climate emergency by the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency.

Speaking at an event hosted by the Association of Foreign Banks, Sir James Bevan warned that banks which failed to divest from coal and oil would be left behind following the global signals towards a net zero future made by the private sector at COP26:

The main messages out of Glasgow are brutally simple, and they apply to banks and other businesses as much as to the rest of us. There is no future in carbon. We must adapt or die.

After COP, investments in coal, oil and other dirty energy are no longer safe bets. As more and more nations move to net zero, fossil fuels will increasingly need to stay in the ground. The market sees that and is on the move.

Since the 2015 Paris agreement, coal's share of global electricity generation has fallen from 39% to 35%, with wind up from 3.5% to nearly 7%, and solar from 1% to 3.5%. Renewable sources of energy now generate electricity at a lower cost than coal. The cost of solar energy has dropped from around \$8 per watt in 1988 to 20 cents or less now. Smart companies, including smart banks, are getting out of carbon fast and divesting themselves of what will soon be stranded assets.

Sir James said the speed of the shift to a low or no carbon economy was likely to increase following the Glasgow Summit:

Throughout history, the most important and disruptive changes have gone through the same cycle. First they are unthinkable, then they look impossible. After that they begin to become feasible, and then they start to happen – slowly at first and then suddenly.

Action on climate which may look politically difficult today could become a massive vote winner after the next devastating firestorm or flood.

Would you really bet against the climate emergency itself, which is driving the actions of politicians and the market? Would you bet against the ingenuity of humans, who have a habit of coming up with game-changing solutions to seemingly impossible technological problems? Would you bet against the courts? Or the consumers? Or public opinion? That's a pretty big coalition to risk your money on.

As well as warning banks of the dangers of sticking with the status quo, Sir James urged them to seize the opportunities of making investments to tackle the climate emergency and praised the work of many that are already going down the path.

A recent report by the Global Commission on Adaptation which found that although it would cost \$1.8 trillion this decade to make the world more resilient to the effects of climate change, that investment could yield over \$7 trillion in net benefits. The Environment Agency has previously said it is much cheaper to invest early in climate resilience than to live with the costs of inaction.

All businesses exist to make money. They all need to do well but in my experience most of them also want to do good. The reality today is that the business world is leading the way on climate and more and more of it is doing well by doing good. Much of the progress now being made, and perhaps the most decisive progress of all, is being made by you – by the banks, the pension funds and the wider financial sector.

The European Central Bank has set out expectations of how banks should manage and disclose their climate risks and is an international advocate for an effective carbon price. At home the Bank of England is ensuring that the financial system is resilient to climate risks and supportive of the transition to net-zero. Lloyds, the UK's largest domestic bank, has set itself the goal of reducing the carbon emissions it finances by more than 50% by 2030. Another UK bank, Triodos, aims to finance only projects with a positive impact on society and the environment.

The Environment Agency's own Pension Fund has a commitment to reduce our listed equity emissions by 95% by 2030 and to allocate money to fund the low carbon transition and help build resilience. In 2017 we joined with the Church of England to launch the Transition Pathway Initiative, which empowers investors to align their portfolios with the goals of the Paris Agreement: it

now has support from over 100 global investors with combined assets of over \$39 trillion.

So far from gambling the planet away on dirty investments as some activists claim, let's recognise that more and more investors are actually driving the evolution of the new economy we need to save the planet. So here's a sentence I never thought I'd say: when we talk about tackling the climate emergency, let's say thanks to the banks."

He concluded that on climate, COP26 has given us a chance to make history, or be judged by it. As an essential part of the economy, and with more power than most countries, banks will be crucial in delivering on that ambition.

On its own, COP26 could never put out the planet's fire. But it offers us a path to do so. When historians look back at Glasgow, how they judge it will depend on what we all do now.