

Joint statement by the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Gove and European Commission Vice-President Šefčovič

Press release

Statement following a meeting in London between the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove and European Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič.



The co-chairs of the EU-UK Joint Committee on the Withdrawal Agreement – European Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič and the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove – met to prepare the upcoming Joint Committee on the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland and the outstanding issues.

After a frank but constructive discussion, and taking into account the views expressed on 3 February by the First Minister and deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, the two co-chairs agreed to:

- reiterate their full commitment to the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement, and to the proper implementation of the Protocol – protecting the gains of the peace process, maintaining stability, avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland and impacting as little as possible on the everyday life of communities in both Ireland and Northern Ireland
- spare no effort to implement solutions mutually agreed on 17 December, as they form a foundation for our cooperation
- intensify the work of the Specialised Committee on the Protocol in order to address all outstanding issues, with the shared objective to find workable solutions on the ground
- underpin this work by further joint engagement by the UK and the EU with business groups and civic society in Northern Ireland
- convene the Joint Committee no later than 24 February to provide the necessary political steer and approval to this work in the spirit of

collaboration, responsibility and pragmatism

Published 11 February 2021

Respecting Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity

- UK condemns Russia's ongoing violation of international law and calls on Russia to stop arming its proxies and fuelling the conflict in Eastern Ukraine

Remarks by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at Security Council briefing, 11 February 2021

I would like to start by thanking our briefers. The United Kingdom reiterates its support for the Minsk agreements and the roadmap they provide for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and for French and German efforts through the Normandy process.

The significant reduction in violence is welcome, but the ceasefire remains fragile. Russia continues to supply arms and personnel to its proxies. Russia and its proxies continue to block new entry-exit points along the line of contact, and the full implementation of plans for disengagement and demining.

We agree that local elections must pave the way for Special Status for Donbas. Yet Russia will not support the security conditions needed to enable these elections.

Russia claims it is not a party to the conflict, but it instigated and continues to fuel the conflict. And innocent civilians suffer because of it. Nearly 3,500 civilians have died, and 3.4 million are in need of humanitarian assistance.

We remind Russia of its obligations. It must withdraw its military personnel and weapons from the territory of Ukraine, cease its support for the armed formations it backs and stop access restrictions and intimidation of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in areas held by its proxies.

Russia's only objective is to undermine Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We urge Russia to match the political will demonstrated by Ukraine so that real progress can be made.

I reiterate the United Kingdom's enduring support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognised borders and territorial waters. The Ukrainian people deserve peace. We will hold Russia to account for this.

[E3 statement on attack on Abha International Airport, Saudi Arabia](#)

News story

The governments of France, Germany and the UK have strongly condemned the attack claimed by the Houthis on Abha International Airport, in the South of Saudi Arabia, on February 10.



The E3 (Germany, France and the United Kingdom) strongly condemn the attack claimed by the Houthis on Abha International Airport, in the South of Saudi Arabia, on February 10.

Continued attacks of this nature, including those which target civilian areas in violation of international law, illustrate the seriousness of the threat that the proliferation of drones poses to the stability of the region. We reiterate our firm commitment to the security and integrity of Saudi territory, and reaffirm our strong support for a swift resolution of the Yemeni conflict which will bring much-needed stability to the region.

Published 11 February 2021

[Foreign Secretary statement on China's](#)

[decision to ban BBC World](#)

Press release

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab comments on the Chinese decision to ban the broadcasting of BBC World News.



Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab said:

China's decision to ban BBC World News in mainland China is an unacceptable curtailing of media freedom.

China has some of the most severe restrictions on media and internet freedoms across the globe, and this latest step will only damage China's reputation in the eyes of the world.

Published 11 February 2021

[Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock on proposals for a Health and Care Bill](#)

Coronavirus has challenged our health and care system like never before. Our health and care staff have excelled at this time of crisis.

Just as we recognise their contribution, it is also vital we listen and act on changes that will support our NHS, integrated care, and lead to direct benefits for patients.

Over the past year, collaboration across health and social care has accelerated at a blistering pace. From setting up new hospitals in a matter of days to moving tens of thousands of appointments online, we've seen what we can do when we work together, flexibly, to adopt new technology focussed on the needs of the patient, and cast aside bureaucratic rules.

Today, I'm setting out our proposals for a Health and Care Bill, building on ideas first put forward by the NHS, so we can build on this progress, and shape a system that can better serve people in a fast-changing world.

First, our plans will cast aside the barriers that get in the way of a truly integrated system. Even before COVID this was needed, as our ageing population has more complex needs so this is more important than ever. Our plans will see different parts of the NHS joining up more seamlessly, and the NHS and local government working side by side to address long-term challenges, and deliver our manifesto commitments, including 50,000 more nurses and 40 new hospitals.

Second, we'll use legislation to bust bureaucracy that gets in the way of people doing their job. For example, the NHS will only need to tender services when it can lead to better outcomes for patients – rather than the current requirements that force them to spend time on competitive tendering even when it adds limited to no value. We want to leave clinicians with more time to focus on frontline care, and for leaders to keep driving the innovation we've seen throughout the pandemic.

Finally, our proposals will ensure NHS England, in a new combined form, is accountable to taxpayers that use it while maintaining its clinical and day-to-day operational independence.

The pandemic has shown the importance of levelling up the nation's health, and addressing the inequalities that coronavirus has laid bare. We have big plans to bring forward reforms in social care, public health and mental health, and these proposals will support this work and help us look to the decades ahead with confidence.

The measures in this [white paper](#) will put us all on a firmer footing for the future. We must seize this opportunity to build back better.