

# Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Iceland: Bryony Mathew

Press release

Dr Bryony Mathew has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland.



Dr Bryony Mathew has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland in succession to Mr Michael Nevin who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Dr Mathew will take up her appointment during August 2021.

Full name: Bryony Mathew

Married to: Paul Mathew

Children: One daughter and one son

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>2020 – present</b>	FCO, Deputy Director Operations, COVID-19 Taskforce
<b>2019 – 2020</b>	FCO, Head of Resourcing Strategy, Human Resources Directorate
<b>2019</b>	FCO, Head of Section, Greece and Cyprus, Europe Directorate
<b>2016 – 2018</b>	FCO, Deputy Commissioner of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) and Head of Policy Section
<b>2013 – 2016</b>	Phnom Penh, Deputy Head of Mission and HM Consul
<b>2009 – 2013</b>	Beijing, Second Secretary, Climate Change and Energy
<b>2008</b>	Bangalore, Head of Science and Innovation, British Trade Office
<b>2006 – 2008</b>	FCO, Desk Officer for EU-Africa, Africa Directorate
<b>2005 – 2006</b>	FCO, Desk Officer, Public Diplomacy
<b>2005</b>	Joined FCO

Published 24 November 2020

---

## [CSPL Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into APPGs](#)

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email [public@public-standards.gov.uk](mailto:public@public-standards.gov.uk). Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

---

## [UKEF signs new export partnership with the UAE](#)

UK Export Finance (UKEF) has signed a cooperation agreement with its counterpart in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Etihad Credit Agency (ECI), that will strengthen trade cooperation and boost investment between the UK and UAE.

The agreement provides a general framework for reinsurance underwriting between UKEF and ECI that will enable the two agencies to combine their financial support to help UK and UAE businesses secure export contracts anywhere in the world.

UKEF can now support the export of products from the UAE through its collaboration with ECI where a transaction also involves substantial trading opportunities for UK exporters in third countries.

The UAE was one of the top destinations for exports supported by UKEF last year and total trade between the two countries is now worth £17.8 billion. This agreement will strengthen this trading relationship and create more opportunities for UK businesses to export.

UK Minister for Exports, Graham Stuart, said:

This partnership is a boost to our trading relationship and to businesses in both countries. The UAE is diversifying its exports away from oil and gas into renewable energy and its goals to reduce its dependency on fossil fuels align with our own.

Having overtaken France last year to become the world's fifth largest exporter, we are determined to help businesses across the UK access the finance they need to take advantage of new

opportunities uncovered by UKEF across the world.

His Excellency Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade and Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of Etihad Credit Insurance, said:

The UAE and the UK have always had strong trade relations over the years, and this agreement reflects the keenness of both nations to enhance the competitive advantage of our respective business sector in the international market. We are pleased to enter this partnership with UKEF, with our strong confidence that this will further help ECI propel UAE businesses towards greater heights. This alliance will prove instrumental in advancing the UAE's national economic non-oil diversification programmes.

Louis Taylor, UKEF's Chief Executive, said:

There is a strong pipeline of new opportunities in renewable energy and healthcare – among others – where UK and UAE businesses can offer their expertise. This agreement will help us tap into that shared potential and increase the scale of new business that we can support in cooperation with ECI.

Massimo Falcioni, CEO of ECI, said:

The UAE and the UK have always had strong trade relations over the years, and this agreement reflects the keenness of both nations to enhance the competitive advantage of our respective businesses in the international market. We are pleased to enter this partnership with UKEF, with confidence that this will further help ECI propel UAE businesses towards greater heights. This alliance will prove instrumental in advancing the UAE's national economic non-oil diversification, in line with our country's vision.

UKEF has a [network of export finance experts](#) based in key markets around the world, servicing Posts in their region, including David Moleshead and Michelle Leong who are both based in the UAE.

If you have any leads on projects in your country, you can contact Michelle Leong at [michelle.leong@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.leong@fcdo.gov.uk) and David Moleshead at [david.moleshead@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:david.moleshead@fcdo.gov.uk).

---

# UK pledges £155 million aid to support peace and stability in Afghanistan

- New UK aid pledge will reduce child mortality rates, and improve access to education and vital infrastructure
- Additional £15 million emergency support will help the most vulnerable cope with the cold winter and Covid-19
- UK remains the third largest bilateral donor to Afghanistan

A £155 million package of support for next year, was announced today by Lord Ahmad, UK Minister for South Asia, via virtual remarks to the 2020 Afghanistan Conference in Geneva. The UK's aid commitment will strengthen infrastructure and government systems, improve health and education services and create the jobs and investment needed for greater economic independence.

The UK's pledge, alongside those of other international donors, also takes into account the start of negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban and progress toward a peace process. Continued UK development funding to Afghanistan beyond 2021 will be closely-linked to both the peace negotiations and further progress on poverty reduction, rule of law, protection of women and minorities rights, human rights more broadly, and democratic governance.

On top of this pledge, the UK is also committing £15 million to the UN's World Food Programme, to help around 100,000 families facing immediate food shortages through the harsh Afghan winter in conditions exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The UK's military and diplomatic efforts have been critical in supporting Afghanistan over the past 19 years. Our UK's aid expertise has helped millions of children go to school and provided life-saving food to those in need.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The UK's support has enabled important progress to be made in Afghanistan on education, access to healthcare, clean water and sanitation, and women's participation in politics.

Our renewed commitment at this crucial time will help deliver a more stable Afghanistan, important both for the Afghan people, but also for the safety of the UK and the world.

UK aid funding will continue to be delivered predominantly through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), with some funding also delivered through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund.

The aid pledge complements UK support to Afghanistan through diplomacy and

security commitments and comes on top of the £70 million security pledge for Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in 2021, which was announced last month. The UK is working hard to support efforts on the peace process and the urgent need for a reduction of violence in Afghanistan.

Previous UK aid in Afghanistan has helped:

- 749,000 children to gain a decent education, of which 290,000 were girls (from 2015 to 2020)
- Provide 385,000 people with sustainable access to clean water and/or sanitation, of which 188,000 were female (from 2015 to 2020)
- Make sure 94% of children under five suffering from severe malnutrition are treated, up from 24% in 2011
- Reduce the new-born mortality rate from 53 to 23 per 1,000 live births (from 2003 to 2018)
- Provide 6.2 million people with access to electricity since 2004

The UK remains the third-largest international donor to Afghanistan, after the US and Germany. The support the UK provides on improving Afghanistan's security, development and governance is crucial to building a stable state and reducing the terrorist threat to the UK.

#### **Notes to editors:**

1. UK aid to Afghanistan is predominantly delivered through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), with some funding also delivered through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund
2. The UK pledged £750 million for 2016-2020 at the Brussels conference. Actual aid spend over the period was £825 million
3. Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world but dependence on aid is falling – according to the World Bank International grants have fallen from more than 100 percent of GDP in 2012 to around 40 percent of GDP today.

---

## **[Exciting roles at Dstl as part of the new National Cyber Force](#)**

News story

The government has announced the formation of the new National Cyber Force (NCF) which will counter threats from terrorists, criminals and hostile states.



The NCF draws together personnel from intelligence, cyber and security agency GCHQ, the MoD, the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) under one unified command for the first time.

Alongside MoD's operational expertise, Dstl's scientific and technical capabilities and GCHQ's global intelligence, SIS (MI6) provides its expertise in recruiting and running agents and its unique ability to deliver clandestine operational technology.

Published 24 November 2020