

Minister Collins statement following G20 Digital Ministers' Meeting

News story

The UK Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy, Damian Collins, attended the G20 Digital Ministers' Meeting in Bali, Indonesia.



The UK Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy, Damian Collins, attended the G20 Digital Ministers' Meeting in Bali, Indonesia to discuss global digital priorities, including skills, connectivity and data free flow with trust. The meeting brought together ministers and senior officials from G20 countries including the US, Canada and Australia.

Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy Damian Collins said:

The diverse membership and collective economic power of the G20 makes it one of the most important international meetings where the challenges facing global digital economies are discussed. It is right that G20 Digital Ministers continue to work together to deliver solutions for the benefit of citizens around the world, based on democratic values and human rights.

In my speech to the G20 digital ministers I condemned Russia's unprovoked and brutal war in Ukraine, as well as their use of cyber attacks and aggressive state sponsored disinformation campaigns to cause further disruption around the world.

I also thanked the Indonesian Presidency for ensuring G20 discussions advanced in some key areas. Progress was made on shared priorities including digital connectivity, skills and literacy, and data free flow with trust.

It has also been a positive opportunity to develop the UK's relationship with Indonesia. I am pleased that Minister Plate and I share the same enthusiasm for the joint projects like developing the Satria 2 satellites which will improve connections for rural

communities and help close Indonesia's digital divide. Our discussions will be a firm foundation to build the UK-Indonesia relationship on digital and technology over the coming years.

The UK will support further progress under future Presidencies, starting with India in 2023. The UK and India have a strong relationship and I was pleased to meet my counterpart, Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, to discuss our mutual digital and tech interests. We agreed to launch the UK-India Strategic Tech Dialogue this year which will promote data, economic growth, and diversifying telecoms supply chains in our two countries.

Published 2 September 2022

Secretary of State speech to 2022 British-Irish Association Conference

It is a great pleasure to be addressing you this evening in these beautiful surroundings for the annual conference of the British-Irish Association.

I would like to start by thanking Dominic for his kind invitation and his words of welcome. I would also like to express my gratitude to Francesca Kay and all of her team for their hard work and dedication in organising this conference.

Since 1972, the BIA has played a key role in bringing people together – politicians, civil servants, academics and faith leaders. Also people from the world of business, journalists, commentators and many more, all of whom have sought to promote dialogue, understanding and good relations throughout these islands as we work to shape a better future together.

So at the outset, I would also like to thank the BIA for everything it has done and will no doubt continue to do in the years ahead.

Over the past two years, we have sadly lost two monumental figures of the peace process in Northern Ireland. In their careers and in their lives, John Hume and David Trimble demonstrated just how much progress could be made on challenges that were deemed insurmountable by coming together and seeking compromise.

They put Northern Ireland's future ahead of party interests, taking enormous personal and political risks to deliver peace. In coming together here this weekend, not only are we reminded of that spirit, but we should look to reignite it as we work together on the challenges in the months ahead.

Belfast/Good Friday Agreement

Nearly 25 years on from the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, we shouldn't lose sight of the magnitude of what was achieved in 1998.

The Agreement marked an extraordinary achievement for Northern Ireland, laying the foundation for the more peaceful and prosperous society that we see today.

The approaching 25th Anniversary of the Agreement offers an opportunity for all communities to come together and recognise that shared achievement.

As we prepare to mark this historic moment, let us be mindful of our responsibilities, particularly to young people, and to future generations in Northern Ireland, and to do all we can to build upon the remarkable progress that has been made in the last quarter century, and to make sure that it endures into the future.

Northern Ireland has so much to offer and huge potential for an exciting and prosperous future.

Strategic Challenges ahead

Of course, there are issues that we currently face, including the Northern Ireland Protocol, dealing with the legacy of the past, restoring a stable Executive and tackling the cost of living – these are extraordinary challenges.

But they are not insurmountable. With constructive engagement and proper understanding, these challenges can be solved, especially as we already share a common goal – to secure the very best possible outcomes for people in Northern Ireland and across these islands.

The UK Government remains committed to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and will continue to work with the Northern Ireland parties and the Irish Government to deliver our vision of reconciliation, equality and respect for all.

We are proud of the progress that we have made in this respect since this conference last met.

However, that is not to say there are not serious challenges ahead.

There are difficult issues like the Northern Ireland Protocol and addressing the legacy of the past where I know there are strong differing views. I understand that – these are complex and sensitive issues and if there were easier solutions they would have been found long before now.

What I can say is the spirit and intent of what we are doing is to deliver a better future for Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Protocol

The Northern Ireland Protocol was put in place to deal with the “unique circumstances” of Northern Ireland, recognising that a solution needed to be found that recognised Northern Ireland’s place as a sovereign part of the United Kingdom and its internal market, which of course is important, in particular to those with unionist identity, as well as to the commercial life of so many businesses. And of course, the Protocol serves the equally important purpose, not just for nationalists, of preserving frictionless trade across the land border through providing access for Northern Ireland to the EU Single Market.

We also accept the importance of preserving the integrity of the EU Single Market, as well as our own. And we accept fully that the economic prosperity of Northern Ireland benefits from trade both East-West and North-South.

However, there are real issues with how the Protocol is currently operating. Those issues increase cost and complexity, and reduce choice regardless of someone’s views on the constitutional position of Northern Ireland.

We are determined to fix those problems, through negotiation and agreement with the EU if at all possible, and thus to deliver stability for businesses and citizens across Northern Ireland. But with legislation if we cannot.

Our aim with the legislation on the Northern Ireland Protocol is to put in place an insurance policy so that we can ensure we have a way of resolving the issues with the Protocol. Like all insurance policies, they are better if they’re not invoked but we must bring about a resolution.

There is also a bigger picture here. We need to get back to finding some common understanding and a relationship of trust between friends and neighbours with a spirit of good intent and a willingness to make things better.

A stronger UK/Ireland and UK/EU relationship is in all our interest, not least given the wider geostrategic challenges we face. Individuals and businesses look to their political leaders, on both sides, to make their lives easier rather than more burdensome.

As politicians, and as legislators, if something isn’t working, we make changes to find a solution. That is what we do – day in, day out, we find the possibilities and the room to make things better for the people we are elected to serve.

I accept that the politics around this is difficult. But given the political will, this can be resolved. And of course the Protocol itself foresees the prospect of it being amended and evolving. We should aim to find a new balance through a new negotiation. And then we can all move on.

Move on to so many other issues that deserve our urgent attention – such as continuing to deal with the Russian aggression which is making Europe more dangerous now than it has ever been since the Second World War, issues

concerning the rising cost of living, the rise in energy prices and concerns over food security.

I also recognise that the UK leaving the EU was a significant change. But it is time now to reach a place of acceptance, and focus on our future relationship as neighbours, as friends, and as allies.

I believe that if we all hold to a commitment and spirit of good intent and put people and businesses first we can make this work.

Legacy

That same genuine commitment underpins our approach to dealing with the legacy of Northern Ireland's troubled past. It is clear that the system as it stands is not delivering truth or justice to people who are still living with the pain from the years of violence and bloodshed.

We have introduced legislation which we believe will address the concerns of those impacted by the Troubles – including those seeking answers and those who served – and so assist in the process of healing and reconciliation. I want to add that we are in listening mode, and my colleagues and I continue to engage directly with the representatives of victims and survivors as the Bill proceeds through Parliament.

Identity, language and culture legislation

In like manner, we believe the identity and language legislation which we have introduced, will support greater cultural inclusion, tolerance and openness.

Abortion

And we are determined to ensure that girls and women in Northern Ireland have equal access to healthcare. It cannot be right that in 2022 they do not have the same reproductive healthcare facilities as girls and women in the rest of the UK.

Economic Investment

That ambition for a better future lies behind the unprecedented levels of financial support and investment we have delivered in Northern Ireland, to help strengthen and grow the economy, along with our contribution to ensure a safer Northern Ireland where the security threat level has reduced for the first time in over a decade.

So whilst there are challenges, there is much we can coalesce around and work together on to help make Northern Ireland a great place to live, work and invest.

Executive Formation

Principal to achieving this goal is of course having a functioning devolved

government.

I therefore urge all Parties, in the strongest possible terms, to work together to form an Executive and address the issues that matter most to people.

There are people in Northern Ireland right now who are suffering. Some don't know how they are going to put food on the table for their families and themselves. I believe it is the duty of their elected representatives to ensure there is an Executive and Assembly up and running so they can start spending the money that is waiting to be spent.

The New Decade, New Approach agreement provided a lengthy period for politicians in Northern Ireland to restore functioning devolved institutions.

But let me be clear, if the Parties do not make full use of that time to earnestly engage to restore a fully functioning Executive, then I will have to call an election at the end of October.

This is not something that the people of Northern Ireland want or need, especially given the present economic circumstances.

What people want is a fully functioning Executive, taking decisive action to tackle the cost of living crisis, improve healthcare, improve education and drive the economy to its full potential.

I am in no doubt that Northern Ireland has the best of both worlds when it has a stable Northern Ireland Executive backed by the support and strength of the UK Government.

And this Government believes firmly in the Union and Northern Ireland's place within it.

I believe that all people and all communities benefit from being part of a strong United Kingdom, a place where everyone is welcome and can live, work and thrive together.

I believe that our relationships across these Islands – be they political, business, family or friendships are one of our Union's greatest strengths.

These relationships are what have got us through difficult times in the past – and will get us through the challenging times ahead.

It is the strength and power of these relationships that gave us the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

So as we look to the 25th Anniversary of that agreement next year, let us continue to foster and strengthen our relationships to reach compromises and solutions for the benefit of all our people. And let us take inspiration from the great leaders that have gone before – so we can deliver our shared vision of an inclusive, safe and prosperous Northern Ireland.

PM call with President Erdoğan: 2 September 2022

Press release

The Prime Minister spoke to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan this afternoon.



The Prime Minister spoke to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan this afternoon.

They welcomed increased UK-Türkiye trade and hoped to expand our existing free trade agreement to build on the growing economic momentum. The leaders also discussed exciting new opportunities to increase collaboration in defence technology and nuclear power.

The Prime Minister congratulated President Erdoğan on Türkiye's indispensable global leadership, most recently in helping to end Russia's grain blockade in Ukraine.

He emphasised the importance of continuing to support Ukraine against an unprovoked invasion, including by maintaining strong economic sanctions on Russia.

The leaders wished each other the best for the future and agreed that the relationship between the United Kingdom and Türkiye would continue to go from strength to strength.

Published 2 September 2022

New labelling to protect water supplies and cut energy bills

Taps, showers, dishwashers and washing machines could all have new water efficiency labels, in a move which will help save consumers over £270 million on bills over 10 years.

The plans, subject to a 12-week consultation launched today (2 September) by the UK Government and Devolved Administrations, will encourage the purchase of more water-efficient products and help customers manage their water and energy bills.

Based on 2019 prices, the label could save £125 million on water bills and £147 million on energy bills over 10 years, as well as 1,200 million litres of water a day – the equivalent of 480 Olympic swimming pools.

Water Minister Steve Double said:

Water is a precious resource. We want to support consumers so they can make savings without having to make significant changes to their daily lives.

These plans will help people to make the right choices to save water and reduce their energy bills.

The proposals aim to introduce a separate water label from the existing energy label for display on toilets, urinals, kitchen sink taps, bathroom basin taps, non-electric shower outlet devices and shower assembly solutions, dishwashers, washing machines and combination washer/dryers.

Hot water use is the second largest use of energy in a home after space heating. Installing a water-efficient showerhead could save an average household (2.3 occupants) 3,762 litres of water, and £17.44 off their combined utility bills per year. A family of four could save 6,468 litres and about £30 off their combined energy and water bill each year.

In 2021 alone, energy efficiency labelling and minimum performance standards led to energy bill savings of £75 for the average dual-fuel household.

David Black, Ofwat CEO, said:

This summer has highlighted the importance of water. Water labelling is a key tool, helping everybody make informed choices that can reduce their water use and bills.

Managing water demand plays a role in tackling the pressures on our water system, alongside pushing water companies to reduce leakage

and looking at new sources and water transfers to increase our future water supply. We support the proposals and look forward to seeing the outcome of this consultation.

Christine McGourty, Water UK Chief Executive, said:

The Government's proposals on water efficiency labelling are a vital step forward in reducing the amount of water we all use, and will allow customers to make informed decisions as well as save money and energy.

Alongside the work that water companies are already doing to tackle leakage from pipes, and invest in infrastructure, cutting water use will help make our water supply more resilient to the existential challenges of climate change.

The consultation launch follows a commitment from the Environment Secretary last year to introduce a mandatory efficiency label as part of [wider plans to safeguard water supplies](#).

The package includes asking water companies to develop a consistent approach on fixing customer supply pipe leakage and developing a roadmap towards greater water efficiency in new developments and through retrofits.

These measures, along with the work from water companies to reduce leakage by 50%, will help meet the ambitions set out in the [National Framework for Water Resources](#) to reduce personal water consumption to 110 litres per person per day by 2050, compared with the current average of 145 litres.

This year we have witnessed the driest July across England since 1935, and since records began for the East and South East.

We have been clear water companies must take urgent action to fix leaks, and Ofwat has put in place clear financial consequences for companies that underperform on leakage. We also expect water companies to make use of smarter technology to help manage water demand and reduce leaks.

This comes alongside ongoing action to hold companies to account on sewage spills. On Friday 26 August we announced that [water companies will face the strictest targets on pollution from sewage](#) ever under a new plan to tackle sewage discharges in our waters.

[You can respond to the consultation here.](#)

Independent panel appointed to oversee partnership with Rwanda

The UK and the Government of Rwanda have today (Friday 2nd September), announced the appointment of a new panel consisting of eight experts, who will provide independent oversight of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda.

The Independent Monitoring Committee is made up of members with a diverse range of expertise, including within the human rights, migration, asylum, international law and business sectors. They will be responsible for reviewing and reporting on the delivery of the partnership, including monitoring the end-to-end operations from the UK to Rwanda.

This will include reviewing and reporting on the implementation of the commitments made in the arrangement between the two governments, outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel said:

Our world-first migration partnership will help to stop dangerous, illegal and unnecessary journeys being made to the UK, while giving people the opportunity to claim asylum in Rwanda and rebuild their lives.

I am proud to be working with the Rwandan government on this world-leading policy, and our new Monitoring Committee will play a key role in holding both governments to account so we can deliver on our commitments to the British public and save lives.

Rwandan Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Dr. Vincent Biruta, said:

Rwanda looks forward to working with the UK to implement the innovative Migration and Economic Development Partnership, which will offer a safe, secure home for people seeking protection, as well as a chance for migrants to live, work and develop alongside Rwandans.

The members of the Monitoring Committee are experienced and highly committed individuals who will ensure that the programme is delivered to high standards and becomes a sustainable solution to the global imbalance in human capital opportunities, a major factor that is driving irregular and dangerous migration.

The Monitoring Committee will highlight any areas of concern immediately to

the co-chairs of the Joint Committee, a panel of senior officials from both governments.

It includes experts from around the world, who have a wealth of experience across migration policy, international law and academia.

Members appointed by the UK Government

Harish Salve QC

Harish Salve is internationally recognised as one of the world's leading legal counsels, who formerly served as Solicitor General of India and is a senior advocate at the Indian Bar. He is an experienced and senior immigration lawyer whose practice includes public international law and human rights. A highly experienced senior lawyer; he has built a global reputation for international commercial arbitration and litigation. His practice also encompasses public international law and human rights.

Karina Kielbinska

Karina Kielbinska is an international business management and marketing expert with a wealth of experience across the private and public sector. Most recently she served as Chair of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) for Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre, which plays a crucial role in giving independent oversight of prisons and places of immigration detention, to ensure the conditions and humane treatment of people in detention. Previously she has worked as a global marketing director for GlaxoSmithKline and held marketing director roles at Cadbury both in the UK and Australia.

Morten Lisborg

Morten Lisborg is a Danish independent migration and policy advisor with over 20 years' experience across the sector in various roles. He has worked with migration and refugee issues for numerous agencies and organizations in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and in Europe. Morten has published several reports and articles on challenges related to the current European asylum system and provides policy advice to Danish political parties. In 2020 Morten was appointed as a member of the Danish Council for Development Policy.

Alexander Downer

Alexander Downer is an immigration expert currently serving as Executive Chair at the International School for Government, King's College London. He was appointed in February 2022 to lead a wide-ranging, independent review of Border Force to assess its structure, powers, funding and priorities to ensure it can keep pace with rapidly evolving threats and continue to protect the border.

Members appointed by the Rwandan Government

Diko Mukete

Diko Mukete is the Vice Chair of the Board of Rwanda Finance Limited. He is

on the Management Board of the African Legal Support Facility in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. He is an experienced economist and lawyer with a 25 year career at the African Development Bank (AfDB), where he led several successful economic and financial policy dialogues with governments across Africa. He is a Barrister-at-Law of Gray's Inn, London, and a member of the Cameroon Bar Association.

Julien Kavaruganda

Julien Kavaruganda is founder and senior partner of K-Solutions & Partners, a corporate law firm in Kigali in Rwanda, and an experienced lawyer who has held various leadership posts in regional bar associations. He practiced at the Brussels Bar Association in Belgium, before joining the Rwanda Bar Association where he is the immediate past president. He is also Vice Chairman of the Kigali International Arbitration Centre, and on the Board of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association.

John P Sendanyoye

John P Sendanyoye is a retired senior official of the International Labour Organization (ILO), where he headed the Service Sectors Team and previously served as Regional Programming Officer for Africa and Asia and the Pacific in Cote d'Ivoire and Thailand respectively. He has vast experienced in international labour activities including global dialogue on the impact of financial crisis on workers, and has published numerous papers and articles related to his work in ILO.

Marie Sylvie Kawera

Marie Sylvie Kawera has been a commissioner of Rwanda's National Commission for Human Rights since 2017, where she is actively involved in the monitoring, evaluation and investigation of diverse human rights issues. Previously, she has been a lawyer and adviser to civil society organizations and political parties.

The candidates were chosen following a rigorous selection process led by the Joint Committee. Appointments were jointly agreed by the co-chairs of the Joint Committee.

Further information

[Terms of Reference and full member bios for the Monitoring Committee](#)

[Terms of Reference and Summary of Notes for the Joint Committee](#)

[UK-RW Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#)

[Factsheet: Migration and Economic Development Partnership](#)