

PM call with PM Morawiecki of Poland: 27 June 2020

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Polish Prime Minister Morawiecki.



A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The Prime Minister spoke to Polish Prime Minister Morawiecki today.

Both leaders expressed regret that they could not meet in person for the annual UK-Poland Intergovernmental Consultations. They endorsed the joint Action Plan as a blueprint for UK-Polish cooperation over the coming months on issues including defence and trade.

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Morawiecki also reflected on the strength and history of the relationship between the UK and Poland as we look ahead to the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

The leaders discussed the shared fight against coronavirus and agreed on the need to ensure a sustainable global recovery where openness and free trade is prioritised.

On the UK's future relationship with the EU, the Prime Minister welcomed the agreement on both sides to an intensified process of negotiations in July. He said the UK would negotiate constructively but equally would be ready to leave the transition period on Australia terms if agreement could not be reached.

Published 27 June 2020

Social housing to be prioritised for veterans

- Housing Minister announces improved access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces and veterans suffering from mental ill health
- Other new measures will ensure former spouses or civil partners of serving personnel are not disadvantaged when applying for social housing
- The government is committed to making the UK the best place in the world to be a veteran and to ensuring serving and former personnel do not face disadvantages when seeking social housing

New measures to ensure access to social housing is improved for members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families have been announced this Armed Forces Day (27 June 2020) by Housing Minister Christopher Pincher.

The government has today set out how councils should ensure members of the Armed Forces and veterans who need support with their mental health, because of conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, are given the priority for social housing they deserve.

New measures also mean former spouses or civil partners of serving personnel will be given extra support when applying for social housing. They will be exempted from rules requiring them to be a local resident before being given social housing in the area to ensure they are not disadvantaged when applying.

[Guidance](#) has been issued to councils to encourage staff-training so they understand the circumstances of the Armed Forces community and consider their housing needs appropriately. This will also promote a consistent approach across councils in how they consider social housing applications.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP said:

The health and wellbeing of our Armed Forces, whether they are Regulars, Reservists or veterans, is a priority for this government.

I want to ensure serving and former members of the Armed Forces who suffer from mental ill health are given the priority for social housing they deserve, together with appropriate care and support.

There can be no better time than this Armed Forces Day, after such a challenging time, to celebrate the skill, tenacity and professionalism of our Armed Forces. Their contribution has been extraordinary and we are all grateful for their efforts.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer MP said:

This new guidance is the Armed Forces Covenant in action – government ensuring that the whole armed forces family can more easily access public services.

The unique circumstances of veterans and service families will now more readily be taken into account when allocating housing and I'm proud that we're announcing these measures on Armed Forces Day.

Armed Forces Day (AFD) is an opportunity for the UK public to celebrate the work of our Armed Forces. Saturday 27 June 2020 will be the 12th annual AFD.

Throughout the COVID-19 response our armed forces have offered immense support, including coordinating the distribution of Personal Protective Equipment and playing a key role in recovery planning

Since 2012, current and former service personnel who have been recently discharged have not had to be "resident" in an area to get access to a social home for their families, as part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. Under the Covenant, veterans with more urgent housing needs are also eligible for additional preferences for social housing.

[RAF flights to take UK aid-funded supplies to Africa to tackle coronavirus](#)

News story

The first of a series of Royal Air Force flights taking medical supplies to Africa to help fight the coronavirus pandemic departed today (Saturday, June 27).



A Royal Air Force C-17 Globemaster flies overhead

The RAF C-17 took off from RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire on a journey funded by the Department For International Development. The transport aircraft was carrying a field hospital, which will be used as a backup facility for frontline aid workers in the region. Aid workers from around the world are playing a crucial role in West Africa working to improve health systems, prevent the spread of coronavirus and save lives.

It comes after the UK responded to a request by the United Nations (UN) to NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre. The UN is leading global logistics efforts to make sure medical supplies reach those who need them most during the pandemic.

With commercial flights disrupted and the cost of cargo flights having escalated, the UK's support is crucial.

The UK-aid funded field hospital has been organised by the UN World Food Programme (WFP), and will have the capacity to care for up to 92 people.

The UK has previously announced £15 million of support to the WFP to support its coronavirus response.

International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

This field hospital will play an important role in the global battle against coronavirus.

Aid workers are on the frontline of the coronavirus response, and it is critical they are protected so they can continue their life-saving work.

This is the best of British – the UK military and UK aid – working together to solve a global problem for the benefit of all of us. No one is safe until we are all safe.

The field hospital, which weighs approximately 130 tonnes, the equivalent of seven buses, will be transported to Accra in up to five flights. It will then be built to support the coronavirus response where the need is greatest.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

The RAF and NATO are always here to help our Allies, friends and those in need around the world. I'm proud that while dealing with coronavirus we are able to provide such support to Ghana and other countries.

The World Food Programme's Executive Director, David Beasley, said:

WFP is incredibly grateful for this support from the UK Government in transporting essential humanitarian infrastructure and medical supplies to Africa. Commercial transport is massively disrupted.

This kind of action allows humanitarian and health staff to stay and deliver at their duty stations on the frontline to battle the COVID-19 pandemic.

Personnel load an aid cargo pack into the back of a C-17 aircraft,

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said:

NATO Allies are working together to address the COVID-19 pandemic and to support our partners. Last month, NATO agreed to support the UN's global call for airlift assistance. I warmly welcome that the United Kingdom is the first NATO Ally to come forward with an aid flight, delivering supplies to build a field hospital in Ghana. This is a concrete demonstration of solidarity in action – NATO Allies stepping up to save lives.

Cargo sits waiting to be loaded onto a C-17 aircraft.

Notes to editors

- Up to £1.2 million of UK aid money has been made available to cover the costs of the military flights.
- The Department for International Development and Ministry of Defence have offered support to WFP, which is setting up the logistical infrastructure on behalf of the UN, so the international health and humanitarian response can continue during the coronavirus pandemic.
- The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is NATO's principal civil emergency response mechanism in the Euro-Atlantic area. It is active all year round, operational on a 24/7 basis, and involves all NATO Allies and partner countries. The Centre functions as a clearing-house system for coordinating both requests and offers of assistance mainly in case of natural and man-made disasters.

Published 27 June 2020

Minister Adams statement on clearance operations in Rakhine State, Myanmar

Press release

Minister for Asia Nigel Adams has made a statement on the concerning events unfolding in Rakhine State.



The Minister for Asia, Nigel Adams, said:

We are deeply concerned by the reports of ongoing clearance operations by the Myanmar military in Rakhine State, which have caused thousands of civilians to flee their homes.

These operations have a disproportionate impact on civilian populations, endangering lives and causing lasting damage to property and livelihoods.

We urge the Myanmar military to uphold its obligations to protect civilian populations, and respect the order issued earlier this year by the International Court of Justice.

Further information

Published 27 June 2020

Joint statement on Pride Month 2020

World news story

'Five Eyes' partnership calls upon the Russian government to adhere to its commitment to protect the rights of all citizens, including the LGBTI community



We, the undersigned Ambassadors and Chargés d’Affaires of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, affirm the inherent dignity of each individual as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and call upon the government of the Russian Federation to adhere to its stated commitment to protecting the rights of all citizens, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community. Unfortunately, LGBTI individuals throughout the world continue to face violence, harassment, and discrimination simply because of who they are, and law enforcement authorities often turn a blind eye to the hate speech and hate crimes that are still prevalent in many countries.

This June, we celebrate Pride Month by applauding LGBTI activists and their allies, who are working to ensure that every individual, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, receives the full protection of the law. Human rights are universal. Everyone is entitled to their full enjoyment.

Ambassador Graeme Meehan Australia

Ambassador Alison LeClaire Canada

Chargé d’Affaires Kelsie Wilkinson New Zealand

Ambassador Deborah Bronnert United Kingdom

Ambassador John Sullivan United States of America

Published 27 June 2020