

Change of Ambassador to Qatar – February 2020



Mr Jon Wilks CMG has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the State of Qatar in succession to Mr Ajay Sharma CMG. Mr Wilks will take up his appointment during February 2020.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Jonathan Paul Wilks CMG

Married to: Ms Patricia Haslach

2017 – 2019 Baghdad, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Iraq
2014 – 2017 Muscat, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Oman
2012 – 2014 UK Special Representative for Syria
2010 – 2011 Sana'a, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Yemen
2009 – 2010 Baghdad, Deputy Head of Mission
2007 – 2009 Dubai, British Government Arabic Spokesman
2005 – 2007 FCO, Deputy Head, Security Policy Group
2004 – 2005 FCO, Deputy Head (Political), Iraq Group
2003 Baghdad, Deputy Head, British Office
2002 – 2003 Cabinet Office (secondment) Iraq Analyst, Assessments Staff
1999 – 2002 Special Unpaid Leave (Academic Sabbatical)
1996 – 1999 Riyadh, First Secretary (Economic)
1993 – 1996 Khartoum, Second Secretary (Political and Press and Public Affairs)
1991 – 1993 London and Cairo, Full-time Language training (Arabic)
1990 – 1991 FCO, Assistant Desk Officer Iran, Middle East Department
1989 Joined FCO

Further information

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UK national statement to the 2019 OSCE Ministerial Council

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Thank you Madame Chair,

I would like to start by thanking the Chair in Office, Miroslav Lajčák and the Slovak Government for their warm hospitality and all their efforts over the last year.

Every year, we come together and we focus on the same serious security challenges Europe faces. We know that the OSCE's comprehensive body of principles and commitment holds the solution. The question is whether we have the political will to honour those commitments.

This year, I see a smidgeon of hope.

Hope that the Normandy Summit next week will mark the start of progress towards peace in eastern Ukraine and bring much needed respite to the people of Donbas.

The UK commends President Zelensky's clear commitment to finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict. I hope Russia will play its part by immediately ending support for the so-called separatists, and by upholding its Minsk commitments. We also hope to see an end to the daily intimidation and restrictions experienced by the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission.

I call once again for Russia to end its illegal annexation of Crimea and underline the UK's unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Madame Chair, as the Foreign Minister has just outlined, Georgia's sovereignty is also being violated. For the Georgian people living close to the Administrative Boundary Line, hope is in short supply. The conflict there has divided villages and isolated communities for far too long. Let me also reiterate the UK's support for OSCE efforts to resolve the conflicts in Moldova and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Reducing military risk is fundamental to our comprehensive and co-operative security. The OSCE conventional arms control framework provides the vehicle. If we all demonstrate the necessary political will to implement it fully in letter and spirit. We continue to see the benefits of Vienna Document Modernisation, to rebuild trust, increase confidence and enhance military transparency.

We hope that the rare consensus found last year on the Safety of Journalists

signals renewed respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights. But we are not naïve. Frankly, the human rights picture in parts of the OSCE region is worsening, with unjustified restrictions on civil society, human rights defenders, and independent media.

We also hope that the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 brings comprehensive implementation of OSCE gender commitments. Throughout the region we should make gender equality an integral part of our policies.

Let me end by underlining the UK's strong support to the OSCE – and by pledging our support to the incoming Albanian Chairmanship, as well as our solidarity in the wake of the tragic earthquake.

[The importance of UNOCA in preventing and resolving conflict](#)

Thank you very much, Madam President, and how nice to see you in the chair.

Madam President, the United Kingdom welcomes the efforts of UNOCA – and thank you to SRSF Fall for your briefing and your work and that of your team. We welcome the efforts of UNOCA in monitoring, political peace and security developments and trends in Central Africa this year. We welcome the good offices deployed, the work on conflict prevention and mediation, your support to peace and security initiatives and your efforts to enhance coherence and coordination in the subregion. And I want to say how important we also think it is that you continue your efforts to support ECCAS and ECCAS members in their work to strengthen and reform the organisation. UNOCA should look to enhance its work on early warning and analysis alongside greater coordination with UN country teams in the subregion going forward.

With this focus on conflict prevention in mind, let me turn to some specific country areas within UNOCA's mandate. The UK continues to share the concerns set out in the report about the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in the northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon. We welcome the reports and information that humanitarian access in areas of Cameroon, controlled by the government of Cameroon, have improved significantly in the past few months. All parties, though, need to do more to ensure humanitarian access is protected. And I must particularly condemn attacks on health, infrastructure and personnel on schools, teachers, parents and children, as set out in the UNOCA report. Human rights violations and abuses committed by all sides must stop and all allegations must be investigated.

And let me say how much the United Kingdom welcomes the government of Cameroon's steps to convene a national dialogue, and alongside that, the release of detainees. The government of Cameroon now needs to ensure that the key recommendations from the national dialogue are implemented, including

strengthening bilingualism in the education and legal systems; decentralisation through granting special status to the northwest and southwest regions; and taking steps to engage diaspora groups. I stress again, these are the government of Cameroon's own intentions, own policies, but we believe that urgent follow-up on those recommendations is vital to maintain momentum. Put simply, words need to be matched by actions. Failure to do so will only cause the already concerning situation to deteriorate further. And the United Kingdom remains willing, as it has been throughout, to support the government of Cameroon in carrying out these recommendations and urges all UN bodies to do likewise.

Now, Madam President, a united approach on Cameroon is important. The recent joint Commonwealth-Francophonie-African Union visit to Cameroon helped promote the restoration of peace in the northwest and southwest regions. We look forward to hearing about the follow-up recommendations from this joint visit. It's imperative that the regional and wider international community continues to support credible peacebuilding efforts, including through the mechanism of the Peacebuilding Fund, and urgently responds to the growing humanitarian need. We believe that regional and subregional organizations such as the EU and actors play an integral role, and we hope for further joint visits by the United Nations and the African Union to Cameroon and neighbouring countries.

Let me welcome the OHCHR technical mission to Cameroon, which was, of course, at the invitation of its government, and urge prompt, continued and full cooperation between all sides to ensure the protection of civilians and accountability. And it's important that there's follow-up to the visit, including on impunity. Freedom of political expression, must be respected at all times, including in the run up to the forthcoming legislative and municipal elections.

Madam President, let me turn briefly to the situation in the Lake Chad Basin. SRSF Fall reminded us in his briefing, and of course, in his report, on the impact of climate change in that space. The UNOCA report highlighted deplorable high levels of violence and human displacement resulting from Boko Haram and ISWA attacks on civilian and military targets. Now, the United Kingdom recognises the important role of regional countries in supporting stability in the Lake Chad Basin, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force and of course, their hosting of refugees. And a number of us were able to hear from the executive secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission during the Peacebuilding Commission annual session this week on progress made with respect to the regional stabilisation strategy. And all I'd say is I think that we need to do more to ensure full implementation of SCR 2349 to tackle security, humanitarian and development crises in the region.

And we fully support the cooperation that's been exhibited between UNOCA and UNOWAS, and we're very pleased to hear about the joint visits between SRSFs Fall and Chambas, and we look forward to an update when your report on those visits is ready and any conclusions you're able to draw together on the way forward.

The United Kingdom welcomes the progress made to date by President Touadéra

and the CAR authorities since the February peace agreement. We also welcome the reactivation of the CAR-Cameroon and CAR-Republic of Congo Bilateral Commissions and the advocacy role played by UNOCA in helping to bring these about.

We remain extremely concerned by the ongoing political challenges and human rights situation in Burundi and its humanitarian consequences. The elections scheduled for next year are a critical moment for Burundi and we urge the government to work with all parties to ensure a fair and peaceful election.

Let me conclude, Madam President, by noting again that the report and the briefing set out a number of areas where the UN, in its form of its Secretariat, where the agencies, funds and programmes, where member states can support countries and the region in conflict prevention and conflict resolution. We all need to rise to that challenge, and UNOCA is key to that.

Thank you, Madam President.

International Anti-Corruption Day: working with Guatemala to improve public infrastructure

International Anti-Corruption Day has been observed annually, on 9 December, since the passage of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption on 31 October 2003, 16 years ago, to raise public awareness for anti-corruption and prevent it.

The British Embassy in Guatemala, Acción Ciudadana (Guatemalan Chapter of Transparency International) and the International Infrastructure Transparency Initiative (CoST) are committed to helping tackle the problem of corruption in Guatemala.

In commemoration of International Anti-Corruption Day, CoST published the eighth CoST Guatemala Report on “Promoting the quality of public infrastructure in Guatemala”, showing that it is necessary to pay special attention and timely improve the dissemination, planning, contracting and quality control in public infrastructure works.

Among the conclusions, it is highlighted that Guatemala has made progress in the recognition of corruption as one of the main obstacles that hinder the country’s development possibilities. However, it is necessary to articulate an anti-corruption system that prevents, punishes corruption exemplarily, and generates institutional reforms that guarantee non-repetition of the facts.

The United Kingdom is pleased to work with these prominent actors in

Guatemala to continue advancing the transparency agenda in the country.

[International Human Rights Day Film Festival in Luxembourg](#)



Poster for International Human Rights Day Film Festival co-organised by the British Embassy.

The British Embassy in Luxembourg is taking part in a short film festival, under the patronage of the Grand Duchess, alongside the Embassies of Belgium, Germany, Poland, France currently part of the UN Security Council and our Luxembourg hosts. The purpose of the event is to underline our shared values with regard to protecting universal human rights.

This is a two-day event taking place during the evenings at [Cinémathèque on 10 and 11 December](#). The Festival will show a selection of films and documentaries demonstrating some of the human rights violations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

There will be some discussion around the films involving the film directors and subject matter experts where present.

Each evening will end with a short drinks reception for those attending. Everyone is welcome!

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