

# **Press release: UK AT HEART OF INTERNATIONAL MISSILE DEFENCE EXERCISE**

US-led Exercise Formidable Shield has today begun in waters off the West Coast of Scotland.

A Royal Navy Type 45 Destroyer and two Type 23 Frigates will, alongside ships and crews from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and the United States, join one of the most sophisticated and complex air and missile exercises ever undertaken in the UK.

Lasting a month, allies will work together to detect, track and shoot down both anti-ship and ballistic missile targets. 13 ships will fire on 12 live missile targets over four days, improving how allies work together in an air and missile defence environment.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

North Korean tests have shown the danger of rogue states developing longer range missiles. By hosting this cutting-edge exercise in anti-missile defence with allied navies Britain is at the forefront of developing a more effective response to this growing threat.

Rear Admiral Paul Bennett, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Capability) said:

Formidable Shield is a terrific example of the leading role that the UK plays in development of maritime air and missile defence – protecting our people and working with our allies.

Ahead of the exercise, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and QinetiQ recently invested £60 million into the Hebrides Range to modernise the equipment and facilities. A further £16.8 million will be invested in two new BAE Systems tracking radars, to be installed on St Kilda, and upgrade two existing radars at MOD Hebrides.

The new radars are part of the £95m Air Range Modernisation programme agreed in December 2016 with the UK MOD.

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## **Press release: Priti Patel: Extra UK**

# [aid to Dominica following deadly Hurricane Maria](#)

VIDEO: [footage of International Development Secretary arriving on Tortola, British Virgin Islands](#)

VIDEOS AND PHOTOS: [latest photos and footage of the damage on the British Virgin Islands](#)

VIDEOS AND PHOTOS: [latest photos and footage of the devastation wrought in Dominica](#)

The UK is providing a further £5 million UK aid package for Dominica, the island worst hit by Hurricane Maria, the International Development Secretary announced during a visit to the region today (Sunday 24 September).

Hurricane Maria ripped through Dominica earlier this week, leaving 98% of buildings damaged and thousands without power. It was the first category five hurricane to hit the island in living memory, affecting almost the entire 70,000 population.

The UK aid will provide immediate relief, including shelter, hygiene kits and cooking equipment, to the areas left devastated by the tropical storm.

Ms Patel announced the fresh UK government support as she visited HMS Ocean, which on Friday delivered 60 tonnes of UK aid to the Caribbean, almost doubling the amount of aid in the region.

Later today, she will spend time on the British Virgin Islands where she will see UK aid in action, meeting families whose lives were torn apart by Hurricane Irma, which struck earlier this month. She will also visit Anguilla to see UK efforts to get schools and businesses up and running to speed up recovery.

The £5 million pledge brings the British Government's financial support for islands hit by Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Irma to £62 million. This has gone to islands including British Overseas Territories: British Virgin Islands, Anguilla and Turks and Caicos.

The British Government is also doubling UK public donations made to the British Red Cross' Irma and Maria appeals, a pledge which has so far raised over £2 million.

During the visit Ms Patel said:

The UK has pledged to give £5 million to the people of Dominica, the island worst hit by Hurricane Maria – on top of the £57 million already promised to the region – to strengthen recovery following these relentless disasters.

I have come to the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla to see first-hand UK aid in action, helping families whose lives have been ripped apart first by Hurricane Irma and then Maria.

The UK is leading the way in the relief effort, delivering emergency food, water and shelter to those who need it most.

We will continue to clear up after this devastation in the weeks, months and years to come.

The UK was one of the first to arrive in Dominica following the storm, with DFID field teams immediately bringing urgent medical supplies such as insulin and water purifiers. Much needed shelter has also arrived.

The UK is working with the UN, Red Cross and other partners on the ground to distribute aid, including food, across Dominica. Alongside this, we are supporting the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) to provide emergency healthcare, safe water and sanitation, and manage disease outbreaks. UK aid will go directly on restoring health services and increasing access to healthcare in the most affected areas.

This UK aid comes after the Prime Minister of Dominica formally requested international support to address the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria.

40 DFID aid experts are on the ground alongside over 2,000 military and 50 police officers and DFID has chartered a number of flights and vessels which will transport additional relief items when and where they are most needed.

The DFID field team are also looking at long-term recovery on the islands, and rebuilding houses, hospitals and schools. During her visit, Ms Patel will meet Government representatives from the overseas territories to discuss how to build back better to make sure these islands have greater resilience to future storms.

40 tonnes of humanitarian aid has already been distributed across the Caribbean, including over four tonnes of food and water on the British Virgin Islands; 720 litres of water to the Turks and Caicos Islands; and over two tonnes of building materials to Anguilla.

Work to prepare Anguilla for the impact of Hurricane Maria proved hugely successful in preventing further damage to infrastructure. Two tonnes of corrugated iron was provided to bolster hospital and police stations roofs. Food, tarpaulins, hygiene and shelter kits provided by DFID are also being distributed on the island by the Red Cross.

Vital supplies, including food, bottled water and shelters, were also distributed to the Turks and Caicos Islands earlier this week via three RAF flights and DFID field teams are urgently assessing the damage on the island. A DFID barge will soon arrive with supplies to restore power, including building materials, generators and equipment.

A Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Rapid Deployment Team (RDT) has

arrived in St Lucia to provide consular assistance to affected British nationals who have left Dominica by ferry. The FC0 is also finalising plans for an RDT to travel to Dominica to provide consular assistance to affected British Nationals.

1. The £5 million is UK Overseas Development Assistance funding for immediate humanitarian needs and early recovery in Dominica.
  2. This additional £5 million brings the total UK response to £62 million. On top of this, the British Government is matching public donations of up to £3 million to the British Red Cross' appeals for Hurricane Irma and Maria.
  3. Five DFID experts are currently on Dominica and are undertaking a rapid needs assessment to identify where aid will be delivered.
  4. DFID's initial assessment team has already moved essential supplies to the region ready to provide immediate assistance once we establish what is most needed. This is helping to restore vital communications and running water, and clearing roads.
  5. Response efforts are being led by DFID experts on the ground, working with national authorities and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).
  6. On Friday, HMS Ocean arrived with over 60 tonnes of UK aid on the British Virgin Islands to provide relief to the victims of both Hurricane Irma and Maria across the region.
  7. The ship arrived with 5,000 hygiene kits, 10,000 water buckets and over 500,000 water purification tablets to provide more than 10 million litres of water, along with more troops to support our aid experts on the ground who are helping restore the lives of those who have lost everything.
  8. This is on top of the 75 tonnes of DFID relief items that have arrived or been bought in the region, including food, water, nearly 3,000 shelter kits, 5,000 solar lanterns and 10,000 buckets.
  9. An additional \$19 million is being provided to Dominica by the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility – which UK aid, along with others, helped to establish – and CCRIF has paid out \$50.7 million in total in light of both Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.
  10. VIDEO: [footage of International Development Secretary arriving on Tortola, British Virgin Islands](#)
  11. VIDEOS AND PHOTOS: [latest photos and footage of the damage on the British Virgin Islands](#)
  12. VIDEOS AND PHOTOS: [latest photos and footage of the devastation wrought in Dominica](#)
  13. More footage of the International Development Secretary's visit will be available later today. Please contact the press office on 0207 023 0600
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# Speech: North East Economic Forum: Exchequer Secretary speech

## **Introduction**

Good morning everyone. It's great to be here in Gateshead today.

This was an area I used to come to regularly when I was growing up.

I'm not actually from the North East – I'm a Yorkshireman born and bred – to the point where I even spent part of my career working for Yorkshire Tea!

But we used to head up the A1 to play the local rugby teams here.

And what's been fascinating to see is just how much this whole region has changed over the decades.

Now when you head up the A1, you're welcomed by that great show of Northern pride – the magnificent Angel of the North.

You see the world's first ever tilting bridge crossing the Tyne to join two vibrant, modern cities.

You see the curved glass of the fantastic Sage Gateshead drawing visitors from across the world.

And you come to the Baltic centre as we have today – and you don't find an old flour mill, you find a contemporary arts value of international renown.

It's certainly changed a fair bit over the years.

## **Former glories**

These are all visible signs of what's been happening in this area – and I think in cities across the North the confidence and self-belief has returned, and is growing.

I don't want to focus too much on the glories of the past.

But the fact is that there was a time when our Northern cities didn't just lead the UK forward – they led the world. When George Stephenson built the first ever public steam railway to take coal between Stockton and Darlington.

When Charles Parsons was developing the steam turbine in Newcastle which revolutionised transport and energy.

When Harry Brearley found a way to make stainless steel – or rustless steel as it was called initially – down in Sheffield.

## **Restoration**

I'm admittedly biased as a Northerner myself.

But the way I see it, our Northern cities used to be the drivers of this country's economic, scientific, and social progress in the 19th century.

That's something that fell away badly in the 20th century as these once powerful cities were allowed to fall into decline.

And now what we want for the 21st century is to recover that ground and see their resurgence.

That's what we're talking about in government, when we talk about our Northern Powerhouse.

It's not a short term project with budgets attached on skills or transport.

It's an idea, an ambition and a promise.

It is a long term government commitment that we will restore our Northern cities to their former place at the vanguard of the UK's economy.

## **Recommitment**

Earlier this month, my colleague at the Treasury, Philip Hammond spoke for the whole of government when he made it clear that the Northern Powerhouse isn't some flash in the pan government project.

It's an economic imperative that is, will remain, and must be at the very top of our agenda.

And it's not just about cities like Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds.

It's the North as a whole – it's Newcastle, it's Sunderland, it's Gateshead, it's Hull.

It's every Northern town and city that has unlocked, untapped potential.

Both to offer a better life for the people who live there – with great jobs, great transport, great attractions adding to all the natural appeal these areas already have in spades.

But as well as improving the quality of lives here, it's also about fulfilling the potential of the North East – and North West and Yorkshire and the Humber too – to really power our national economy forwards as was once the case.

To drive our scientific advances.

To make our cultural mark on the world stage.

## **Lots to offer**

Now in many ways, we can see these things happening already.

The Great Exhibition of the North that will be held here next year is all about showcasing our world-class art, culture and innovation – both past and present. I understand Stephenson's Rocket built in Newcastle is going to be on display.

There also remains a powerful tradition of manufacturing here in the North East – particularly in terms of chemicals, metals and transport equipment.

Particularly of course in cars. The automotive industry is very important in the UK and is a real speciality of this region.

Sunderland's Nissan plant alone produced almost 30% of all UK-built cars last year, and builds more cars than Italy.

And this is a region with a global reputation for life sciences too. Newcastle's Centre for Life is at the helm of that – not only bringing talented researchers together, but also inspiring our next generation of young scientists with their exhibitions and events.

So I was pleased to see it get a funding boost just this month of £2.6 million from the Business Department and Wellcome.

Beyond its manufacturing and scientific prowess, this a great place to invest. Last year, foreign investment in the North East created more jobs relative to the working age population than any other region outside London.

And we saw a faster increase in the number of businesses operating in the North East than anywhere else in the country.

Since 2010, nowhere in the country has seen bigger productivity gains than we've seen here in the North East. Unemployment has fallen most here.

And pay has risen most – an average of 11.5% higher than 2010.

## **The issues**

But in celebrating what this region has to offer, and has achieved, I won't gloss over the issues.

It's the problems that this government is working on.

For example, I just mentioned pay rising here – but we also have to remember that earnings here are still a fair way under the UK average.

That's to be expected when hand-in-hand with that, we have 27% per cent of the population aged 16 and over with no formal qualifications, the second highest rate for any English region.

And despite having some of the best universities in the country, the North

East itself has far fewer graduates than the UK average – with just over 31% compared to 38%.

Productivity is another case in point.

Good gains have been made here, but there remains a prominent productivity gap – 12% compared to the UK average and 33% behind London.

Some good things, but some real challenges.

So what can be done to start to turn these things around?

In short, we need two things.

A North that's ambitious and empowered to lead the way.

And a government that's prepared to back it all the way.

## **Devolution**

Now on the former, we've been undertaking the biggest transfer of power away from Westminster to English regions in living memory.

Only a few months ago, six mayors were elected in England – three of which were in the North – Ben in Tees Valley, Andy in Manchester and Steve in Liverpool.

I was saddened to learn last year that the North East would not be electing a mayor, but I understand and respect local leaders' decisions in this area.

However, government was clear at the time that we would continue to work with those authorities committed to devolution and we're having constructive discussions with the North of Tyne authorities on a potential deal and conversations all over the country on what can be done.

Each of the new Mayors has unprecedented powers and funding for local priorities such as transport, planning and skills.

These will make a real difference tackling issues locally and for helping to address the productivity challenge our economy faces.

I'm looking forward to working with these great regional ambassadors and seeing what we can achieve together.

## **Government backing**

### **1. Connectivity**

But it's not just about what local leaders and businesses can do.

Because as I said, the second thing that's needed is a government that is active in backing you.

A clear example of that is when it comes to improving connectivity.



I could be biased. I spent several years as a transport minister. But connectivity matters.

That's both about ease of movement between places – which doesn't just make people's lives easier, it helps businesses win investment and save money too.

But it's also about digital connectivity too – and it's really important that in this new era of information, the North East, and North more generally, is well connected.

I know from first-hand how much that matters for businesses and families – there are still villages and homes in my own constituency in Yorkshire that can't get mobile reception let alone high-speed broadband.

So that requires serious investment from the government and that's what we've been focused on.

This year, for example, I launched a Digital Infrastructure Investment Fund to improve the UK's internet connections.

And we've already started to deliver full fibre in the North East through the Superfast Programme – with potential for much more through our £200 million Local Full Fibre Networks programme.

And on transport links, there's a huge amount going on. Over 20 schemes in the North East will receive investment from the £380m allocated to the region from the Local Growth Fund.

Just today, the first phase of upgrading the A1 between Leeming and Barton is opening – with the full road due for completion this winter. When fully complete this will create a motorway standard route between London and Newcastle for the first time.

But effective transport means a lot more than just creating motorways. We are investing in our major 'A' roads too, such as the improvements to the A19 at Testos and Downhill Lane in South Tyneside, and between Norton and Wynyard in Stockton-on-Tees. We are also making further improvements to the A1 at Newcastle and south of Gateshead – all of these will help to speed up so many daily journeys.

And we are investing in local roads too. We've provided £21 million towards the Morpeth Northern Bypass, the last section of the A1 to South East Northumberland link road. This will relieve congestion to Morpeth, and improve links to development sites in the area. We are not buying tarmac and bridges just because we like them. We are buying opportunity and access across these areas.

There's also the Great North Rail project – in the next five years, well over £1 billion will be spent operating, renewing, enhancing and maintaining the rail infrastructure across the North of England.

This will dramatically improve journeys for passengers across the North. There will be more and faster services across the region, including between

Newcastle, Manchester and Liverpool.

By 2020 all the trains will be brand new or completely refurbished, and all the Pacer trains will be gone.

And train manufacturing has also returned to the North East. There are now over 1,000 staff and apprentices at the Hitachi site in Newton Aycliffe, producing state-of-the-art modern intercity trains. The first of these trains will be in use on the Great Western line from this Autumn.

I first came to visit this site when it was a green field.

## **2. Industry support**

Beyond connectivity, it's about supporting our industries as the future marches on.

We're working on a modern industrial strategy to do just that.

But meanwhile, we're making good progress in key areas for the region.

As I've already said, life sciences is real strength in the North East.

And we're working with the leading immunologist and geneticist, Sir John Bell on how we support the life sciences sector. The industry-led Life Sciences Industrial Strategy was published at the end of August. We are now working with Sir John and others in the sector to agree an ambitious Sector Deal – with offers and asks on each side of the table.

We've also made a substantial real terms increase in government investment in Research and Development – an extra £2 billion a year by the end of this Parliament. This will include funds targeted at cutting edge healthcare and medicines.

And here in the North East, we've allocated £8.6 million from the Local Growth Fund to the Life Sciences Incubation hub. This hub, the product of a collaboration between Newcastle University and Newcastle City Council, will take forward the LEP's ambition to develop a life sciences super cluster for the North East – with significant new facilities for research, and space for science-based businesses.

And we are investing now in our manufacturing capacity. Nearby, Redcar is home to the headquarters of the £100 million Centre for Process Innovation, part of our High Value Manufacturing Catapult network.

We're investing half a billion in advanced propulsion technology.

And just nearby – in fact, I'm going to go and take a look this afternoon – there's the International Advanced Manufacturing Park – where £75m of publicly funded infrastructure will support a predicted £400 million of private sector investment, and the creation of over 5,000 jobs across the advanced manufacturing and automotive sectors.

The point that I'm trying to make is that government is serious about investment in our scientific and industrial development, which is so central to this region's economy.

### **3. Skills**

And the third and final factor I'll mention today, is what we're doing on skills.

Because let me take you back to that stat I gave you earlier.

27% per cent of over-16s in the North East having no formal qualifications.

Which means lower wages, and less opportunity and freedom to live the lives people want.

So it really matters that we make a big difference here – not only for people on an individual level, but for our businesses which rely on their talents to succeed.

I think this is an issue for the UK as a whole but particularly where we are.

So we've got a lot of work going on here.

We're completely reforming technical education for a start – we need to see bright people coming through who can work in the advanced industrial roles the 21st century needs.

We're really pushing apprenticeships – again to give people the skills businesses need, and we've done a lot of work with employers to make them really useful, stretching training opportunities.

I hope that the many fantastic businesses in the North East that already take on apprentices – from Hodgson Sayers in the construction and manufacturing sector to Sage Gateshead in the creative – will lead really lead the way as business and Government works together to deliver 3 million apprenticeship starts in England by 2020.

### **Conclusion**

So there is a lot of action happening to lay the foundations for that Northern resurgence.

The Northern Powerhouse is about cultural aspiration but the policies around devolution and transport and skills will help.

And the thing to stress is that this isn't a one-sided venture.

This isn't a bunch of politicians in Westminster laying down the law.

And I don't think it would be.

This is a team effort.

This is about government, business, and local authorities across the North all working together.

And the message I want to end with here in Gateshead is this:

It will take hard work.

It will take investment.

It will take ambition.

It will take partnership and collaboration.

But the North East can once again be the engine of the UK's economic, scientific and cultural progress.

Let's not lose any opportunity to see that happen.

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## **Speech: Daesh Resolution to the UN Security Council: statement by Alistair Burt**

Thank you, Mr President. I wanted to begin by thanking Prime Minister Abadi for his statement, and his courage. We know that Iraq and its forces have borne the brunt of the fight against Daesh.

I also want to thank him and his officials for the work they have done with the UK to make this resolution a reality. Mr President, your excellencies I'm delighted to have cast the United Kingdom's vote in favour of this Resolution and I'm grateful to Council members for their unanimous support for this UK-drafted text.

One year after we gathered on the margins of the last UN General Assembly and promised to do all we could to bring Daesh to justice, this Resolution is a vital step towards achieving that profoundly necessary goal.

And as we vote in this chamber, we think of the people who have suffered so grievously at the hands of Daesh – of the innocents whose homelands were overrun, millions who were forced to flee, suffering inflicted on those who stayed, many of whom were massacred or enslaved, civilians who died in terrorist attacks in Europe and around the world, and of the great cities that were occupied and pillaged and subjected to rule by terror.

There can never be adequate recompense for those who were forced to endure the wanton brutality of Daesh, and the dead will not be brought back, but this Resolution means that the international community is united in our

belief that there should, at least, be accountability for those who perpetrated such wicked acts.

The United Nations will now help to gather and preserve evidence of Daesh's crimes in Iraq. I can announce that Britain will provide £1 million to establish the UN investigative team that will lead these efforts – and I would respectfully encourage other countries to contribute.

Bringing Daesh to justice is only possible because Iraq's courageous armed forces have liberated one city after another, including Mosul, advancing with the support of many nations, including my own, who have sent their warplanes into action against the terrorists, breaking Daesh's grip on about three quarters of the Iraqi territory they once occupied.

Wherever Daesh have been driven back in Iraq, the painstaking process of gathering evidence of their crimes can now proceed under the auspices of the UN.

As the United Kingdom Commissioner for the [International Commission of Missing Persons](#), set up after the conflict in former Yugoslavia, it is my hope that some of this evidence will help Iraqi families find out the fate and, even the remains, of their loved ones. Especially in the terrible mass graves which dot the lands which Daesh occupied.

Britain has worked closely with the government of Iraq to bring forward this resolution. And we will continue work alongside the government of Iraq and our partners to implement this Resolution, ensuring that the UN does everything possible to support domestic and international efforts to hold Daesh to account.

And by striving for justice, we shall also be seeking to heal the sectarian divides that Daesh has exploited and inflamed.

The defeat of Daesh as a territorial entity is now within sight, but their downfall will not in itself create peace and stability. Lasting peace will only be secured once we've helped Iraq to overcome sectarian division and achieve the national unity that its people deserve.

And justice is an essential requirement for reaching that goal, for it's justice that leads to reconciliation. And reconciliation is the only way to protect a society, any society, against extremists who would sow hatred and division.

This is why we must help Iraq strengthen its justice system, to ensure all those who commit atrocities in the conflict are brought to justice. In the meantime, we know that bringing Daesh to justice will take time, demanding patience and resolve from us all.

But we owe it to those who have suffered to press ahead, however long the road might be, remembering that many offenders have been prosecuted years after they committed their crimes, as those in Srebrenica will remember.

I will close by reminding the Council of an old phrase: "The millstones of

justice turn exceeding slow, but they grind exceeding fine." Those millstones have begun moving today.

I want to thank my friend the Foreign Minister and the Government of Iraq for our work together in making this resolution a reality. Let us make the consequences of the resolution a reality and bring some justice to those who have suffered for too long.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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## **Speech: Non-proliferation: UN Security Council statement by Mark Field**

Thank you Mr President, and thank you Secretary Tillerson for calling this important meeting of the Security Council.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is the greatest of regional and international security concerns. This threat does not respect national borders. The proliferation of these weapons must end. We all play our part in this.

Our shared rules and norms are designed to keep the world safe. This Council has a responsibility to prevent proliferation, to tackle threats and to respond when these weapons are used.

Individual nations also have a responsibility to implement the measures imposed by the Council and indeed to be ready to go further when the situation requires.

Individually and collectively, we must enforce these rules, working through organisations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, or as groups of concerned states. If we are to succeed, this Council and strong multilateral institutions must be at the heart of that approach. And we must persist when countries continue to defy the international rules-based system.

That is why it is right that we have collectively developed a framework of sanctions against North Korea, and that we have continued to strengthen these sanctions in the face of DPRK's dangerous provocations.

In Seoul only last month, I was struck by the focus of President Moon's government in trying to resolve the situation, recognising that what has long been a regionalised dispute now has truly global ramifications.

Let us be clear. Secretary Tillerson has made it clear that the US does not seek regime change, nor accelerated reunification of the peninsula, nor to

garrison its forces north of the 38th parallel, nor indeed to harm the North Korean people.

Yet the DPRK responded with yet more missile tests and another nuclear test. While the regime prioritises its military programmes, North Korean people suffer deprivation and hardship.

That is why we must all continue to press North Korea to respect the Council's resolutions and even at this stage, to change its reckless course. We must enforce the measures that we have adopted and be prepared to expand them if North Korea continues on its reckless path.

Turning to the very different case of Iran, we now know that the multilateral system can and will continue to deliver results. The [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#) has succeeded in limiting Iran's nuclear capability. Iran has rolled back its nuclear programme. The International Atomic Energy Agency has had unprecedented access.

So the British government will continue to abide by our commitments under the deal and we urge other parties to do the same. Iran must continue to do so if we are all to have confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

However, whilst the JCPOA has dealt with one risk, others, as we all know, remain. Iran continues to play a destabilising role in its region and its ballistic missile testing remains inconsistent with [UN Security Council Resolution 2231](#). Iran must respect the call of this Council and cease these activities.

As other members have said, the situation in Syria also poses serious proliferation challenges. This year sarin gas has again been used as a weapon, a clear violation of the international prohibition on the use of chemical weapons. There must be no impunity for perpetrators of these terrible crimes.

I call on Members of the Council to support the vital work of the Council-mandated Joint Investigative Mechanism and to renew its mandate.

And we must keep driving forward our efforts based on [United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSCR\) 1540](#) to prevent non-State actors from acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction.

We all recognise that these proliferation challenges are complex. They require a persistent and united approach, in line with existing treaties and norms. That is why the UK government, for one, does not believe the treaty banning nuclear weapons, which opened for signatures yesterday, is helpful. It will only, I believe, create unnecessary divisions and undermine the [Non-Proliferation Treaty](#), which rightly sits at the heart of our non-proliferation efforts.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, This Security Council has a heavy responsibility to protect international peace and security. Member states share that responsibility and must play their part in implementing the

Council's resolutions. We now need to work tirelessly together to stop proliferation, to save lives and make the world a safer place.