

Speech: Sovereign's Parade, April 2017: Prime Minister's speech

It is a tremendous honour to represent Her Majesty the Queen at this Sovereign's Parade – and for Philip and me to be able to share this very special day with you and all your families.

For over 2 centuries, Sandhurst has been the ultimate training ground for the best of the best – preparing the future leaders of our armed forces – and those of many of our allies around the world.

And that is what you are: the best of the best.

For graduating today are 163 of Britain's finest officer cadets – and 27 of the finest from 14 countries – stretching from Ukraine to Ghana, and from Malaysia to the United States of America.

Indeed for those of you who came to Britain for the first time, I have to admit we could have given you a warmer welcome than 44 weeks swimming in the coldest waters, hiking across the Black Mountains, conducting live fire exercises in Bavaria and completing the most gruelling and demanding course that any officer cadet could ever have to endure.

But the fact you all came through it is testament to your courage and resilience. So you and your families should be exceptionally proud of everything you have achieved.

We should also pay tribute to the outstanding instructors and staff of the academy who have educated and trained you, and prepared you for this very special day.

As you follow in the footsteps of generations of great military leaders, it is right of course that some things have changed since those first officer cadets passed out of Sandhurst and went on to the Battle of Waterloo.

For example, 2 hundred years ago there would not have been any female cadets among your number. But among today's cohort is the first ever Bahraini woman to graduate – the grand-daughter of Bahrain's Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Sheikh Khalifa, who is here with us today.

And also a constituent of mine who will be the first ever female officer to serve in the Royal Tank Regiment – a direct result of the decision to enable women to serve in the combat arms – something of which we should all be incredibly proud.

The world into which you all now enter is also very different from that which confronted many of your predecessors. The threats we face today are more complex than ever before. And the missions that you will be asked to undertake will be similarly complex.

But for all the differences of the modern world, I believe that 3 tenets endure.

The first is the vital importance of our armed forces.

Whether it is the Royal Air Force flying missions against Daesh over the skies of Syria and Iraq, the Royal Navy protecting our sea lanes in the Gulf, or the British Army playing a leading role in UN peacekeeping missions in Somalia and South Sudan, our military hard power is fundamental to keeping our people safe.

That is why in Britain we will continue to meet our NATO commitment to invest 2% of our GDP in our armed forces and we will continue to honour the [military covenant](#) – doing everything possible to support you and your families at every stage of your career.

Just last week I was in Jordan seeing the work British forces are doing right now to train the Jordanian military so that they can secure their borders against the threat of Daesh from Syria. While last year I met soldiers on Salisbury Plain who were prepared for deployment as part of NATO's high readiness forces.

And I can tell you that nothing fills me with more admiration and gratitude than the exceptional commitment of our armed forces – and their families, who are such a critical part of that sacrifice and service to our country.

So as Prime Minister I want to say very clearly on behalf of the whole country – we will always stand proudly behind you.

The second tenet is the importance of working closely with our allies.

In a world in which many threats to our security no longer recognise traditional geographical borders, our ability to keep our people safe is directly related to the strength of the alliances that we have formed across the world.

As Britain leaves the European Union, I have been clear that I want us to build a new deep and special partnership between Britain and the European Union – a partnership of values, interests and co-operation in areas such as security. So we will play our part to ensure that Europe is able to project its values and defend itself from security threats.

At the same time I want us to become a truly global Britain – going out into the world to build relationships with old friends and new allies alike.

The friendships you have made during your time here will provide the foundations on which many of these crucial alliances will be sustained – and they are fundamentally important to our shared future.

The third tenet is the critical importance of the character and leadership skills that you have developed at Sandhurst. For in the end, the success of our armed forces depends on the people in them.

It was that character and leadership that led a former Sandhurst graduate, the now retired Captain Michael Crofts, to act with such bravery tending to the victims at the scene of the appalling terrorist attack in Westminster last month. And it is that character and leadership that we have seen time and again, on every battlefield and in every conflict where graduates of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst have led their fellow men and women to risk their lives in the service of others.

Military capability and tactical brilliance will always be essential but they will not alone suffice.

For you must also remain true to the values that you have learnt – responsibility, community and fairness together with duty, selflessness and social consciousness – values that define the greatest leaders.

So as you go on from here, take pride in all you have achieved – and take strength from the friendships you have built and from the love and support of your families.

But above all, as you march up the steps from this famous square, take confidence from the values that you hold, remain humble about the trust that will be placed in you; and resolve to live by the motto of this great academy – ‘Serve To Lead’.

[News story: New innovation scorecard platform launched](#)

The improved platform aims to make it easier to see uptake of pharmaceutical products and medical innovations within the NHS.

On 12 April 2017, NHS Digital [launched a new web platform for the Innovation Scorecard](#).

The scorecard reports on the use of medicines and medical technologies in the NHS in England, specifically those which have been positively appraised by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) since 2012.

The site now provides greater transparency and is easier to use.

Users can now:

- compare commissioning organisations' uptake of medicines
- view information without having to download data
- share results more easily and securely
- look at overall levels of prescribing by medicine

The Innovation Scorecard is part of the government's broader goal of supporting open data and transparency.

The next scorecard is scheduled to be published in July 2017.

News story: Imran Gulamhuseinwala appointed Open Banking Implementation Trustee

Mr Gulamhuseinwala, who was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours list for his contribution to the financial services sector, is a London-based Partner for EY and leads its Global FinTech practice. He will be seconded from EY to Open Banking.

He will head Open Banking, the organisation that the major banks were ordered to create and fund by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to develop the common technical standards underpinning open banking.

Mr Gulamhuseinwala, who was nominated for the role by the CMA, replaces Andrew Pinder who sadly passed away earlier this week after stepping down from the role.

Alasdair Smith, who chaired the CMA's market investigation into retail banking that led to the Open Banking remedy, paid tribute to Andrew Pinder's achievements and welcomed Imran Gulamhuseinwala on board. He said:

It is very sad news to hear about Andrew, who had done a great job in successfully steering the project through its very challenging first phase and getting it off to a strong start.

We now wish Imran well as he leads the project into the next phase, which will transform retail banking in Britain and bring substantial benefits to consumers and the economy.

Notes for editors

Imran has worked in financial services for 18 years. He joined EY in 2014 and now leads its dedicated FinTech practice globally. He spent 8 years investing in the sector, and is also the co-founder of CommuterClub, a FinTech 50 start-up which helps commuters to access savings for annual travel season tickets. At EY, Imran has worked closely with government, regulators and industry bodies to drive the FinTech agenda, leading studies for both [UK Trade & Investment](#) and [HM Treasury](#) to measure the size and growth of the

FinTech sector in the UK and develop a strategy for future growth. Imran has a Masters in Engineering from Cambridge University and is a CFA charter holder.

[News story: Providing our services in Welsh](#)

Update on our work to provide services in the Welsh language.

We take the obligations of our [Welsh Language Scheme](#) seriously and want our Welsh speaking customers to be able access our services in Welsh. As we develop our online services we are making sure that Welsh speakers can access these services in Welsh and recently conducted focus groups with them to better understand what, in their opinion, makes a great Welsh digital service.

HMCTS has already developed new services which are available in Welsh. Our users can get [help with fees](#), [enter a plea in Welsh](#) or [pay a court fine](#) in Welsh. A [full list of Welsh services on GOV.UK](#) is available.

We are also in the process of reviewing our Welsh Language Scheme in order to ensure that it more adequately reflects the needs of Welsh speakers. We will also look at ways of raising awareness that Welsh speakers have an absolute legal right to speak Welsh in any court or tribunal hearing in Wales.

Customer comment:

Thank you very much you have been brilliant in helping me to complete in Welsh as I find it much easier in my own language than having to think of the English words!

Customer comment:

Going to court is stressful enough, but being able to discuss my case with you in Welsh made the experience a lot better and made me feel at ease.

Hywel Hughes, Head of Welsh Language Services at HMCTS discussed the development of services in Welsh in his [Inside HMCTS blog post](#).

Press release: GNPC Operating Services Company (“GOSCO”) and Lloyd’s Register to deliver services to Ghana

Lloyd’s Register has signed an agreement with GOSCO, to form a joint venture dedicated to providing well project management, well engineering and associated site survey, geotechnical and rig inspection services, in the territorial waters of the Republic of Ghana.

The aim of the joint venture company, known as ‘Lloyd’s Register Wells Ghana Limited’, is to make available world-class engineering and operations, risk management and performance solutions to support operators deliver safe, cost-effective and compliant E&P activity.

Matt Rothnie, Vice-President for the Wells business at Lloyd’s Register, says: “We have joined forces with GOSCO to set up this joint venture as a response to growing industry interest in Ghana’s oil and gas potential along with the requirement to build capability in the Ghanaian E&P sector. This move is another example of Lloyd’s Register’s strategy to work in partnership with local oil and gas players to benefit from their local experience whilst providing the benefit of Lloyd’s Register’s global knowledge and technical expertise.” The new joint venture will be an indigenous Ghanaian company and based in Accra.

The potential impact of new discoveries on the Ghanaian economy has led to phenomenal interest in Ghana’s petroleum sector both locally and internationally. Amidst the excitement, the key development objective of the government of Ghana remains focused on the growth of the economy to accelerate development and industrialization; the oil and gas industry is proven to contribute significantly to strong growth in producing countries.

However, the discovery of oil in commercial quantities poses a number of challenges that must be addressed. Key of which is the need to establish a robust regulatory framework and institutional capacity in key areas of governance for effective management and oversight of the sector. This is because prudent management and policing of the sector has a significant impact on socio-economic development.

Rothnie highlights: “We believe this joint venture will create good long-term opportunities for Ghana’s E&P industry as we look to collectively achieve the highest levels of safety and performance providing the very latest ‘know-how’ and application of technology for well operations.”

Michael Amoah, CFO of GOSCO says: “We are very pleased to have formed our joint venture with Lloyds Register; we see real opportunities in key aspects of the upstream value chain for joint ventures which bring together the

operational experience of Ghanaian companies with the niche high quality skills of an international partner.”

Scottish Development International, the Scottish government’s international arm, helped Lloyd’s Register in the joint venture development.

Gary Soper, Africa Regional Manager for Scottish Development International says: “Working from our West Africa hub in Accra, Ghana, we are well placed to introduce West African companies to Scotland’s oil and gas supply chain to access collaborative opportunities in the region. We are very pleased to see Lloyd’s Register forge this relationship with GOSCO in Ghana and help to develop their plans for current and future African oil and gas fields. Lloyd’s Register has a long tradition and experience in resolving and sharing solutions to complex commercial situations that can only help to bring benefits to the emerging oil and gas markets across the continent, especially at this critical time of low oil prices and the need for quality, independent cost-effective safety and performance solutions.

About Lloyd’s Register

Lloyd’s Register (LR) is a global engineering, technical and business services organisation wholly owned by the Lloyd’s Register Foundation, a UK charity dedicated to research and education in science and engineering. Founded in 1760 as a marine classification society, LR now operates across many industry sectors, with over 9000 employees in 78 countries.

Lloyd’s Register has a long-standing reputation for integrity, impartiality and technical excellence. Its compliance, risk and technical consultancy services give clients confidence that their assets and businesses are safe, sustainable and dependable. Through its global technology centres and research network, Lloyd’s Register is at the forefront of understanding the application of new science and technology to future-proof its clients’ businesses.

About GOSCO

GOSCO (www.gosco.com.gh) is an independent Ghanaian E&P services company. We provide services to participants engaged in oil and gas exploration, development and production activities (located onshore and offshore Ghana), including acting as operator in relation to such activities. A key tenet of GOSCO’s business strategy involves partnership arrangements with key international upstream service providers to provide services in areas that local capacity may be lacking within Ghana. These services may include but are not limited to: Seismic Acquisition, Sub-Surface Data Analysis and Interpretation, Drilling, Floating Production, Storage and Offloading Vessels, Environment, Health and Safety.

About Scottish Development International

Scottish Development International (SDI) works to attract inward investment and knowledge to Scotland to help the economy grow. It also helps Scottish

based companies to trade overseas and promotes Scotland as a good place to live, work and do business. It is a partnership between the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and its work is guided by the Scottish Government's strategy for economic development in Scotland.

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