

# Press release: Minister Ellwood statement on the advance of Iraqi forces in eastern Mosul

From:

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Part of:

FCO Minister Tobias Ellwood welcomes the progress of Iraqi forces as another step towards defeating Daesh.

Minister Ellwood said:

We welcome progress made by Iraqi forces in eastern Mosul which marks another step towards defeating Daesh.

There is still a long way to go. As Iraqi forces prepare for western Mosul, I pay tribute to their bravery and urge them to continue to put the protection of Mosul's innocent civilians at the heart of everything they do.

The UK, as part of the Global Coalition, is committed to continuing to provide the government of Iraq with political, military, humanitarian and stabilisation support, as they work to deliver the political reform, national reconciliation and basic services all Iraqis want and deserve.

## **Further information**

Follow Foreign Office Minister Tobias Ellwood on Twitter: [@TobiasEllwoodMP](https://twitter.com/TobiasEllwoodMP).

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## [News story: Avian flu confirmed at a farm in Preston, Lancashire](#)

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The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer has confirmed H5N8 avian flu at a premises in Preston, Lancashire.

The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer has confirmed H5N8 avian flu in a flock of farmed breeding pheasants at a premises in Preston, Lancashire. A 3km Protection Zone and a 10km Surveillance Zone have been put in place around the infected premises to limit the risk of the disease spreading.

The flock is estimated to contain approximately 10,000 birds. A number have died and the remaining live birds at the premises are being humanely culled. A full investigation is under way to determine the source of the infection. Public Health England advise that the risk to public health from the virus is very low and the Food Standards Agency is clear that bird flu does not pose a food safety risk for UK consumers.

[Read the latest advice and information on avian flu in the UK](#), including actions to reduce the risk of the disease spreading, advice for anyone who keeps poultry or captive birds and details of previous cases. Journalists with queries should [contact Defra press office](#).

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## [Press release: Priti Patel statement in response to \\$8bn appeal for Syria in 2017](#)

Finland and the United Nations co-hosted an event on the Syria crisis in Helsinki today, which has seen the launch of a UN-led appeal for \$8 billion to meet humanitarian needs inside Syria and across the region in 2017.

Responding to the new appeal, International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UN's call-out to the international community today is the

single biggest appeal it has ever made, highlighting that the conflict in Syria remains the world's biggest humanitarian crisis.

The siege of east Aleppo at the end of last year reminded the world of the suffering and brutality that continues to be inflicted on the Syrian people after six years of unrelenting conflict. Schools and hospitals were hit and starvation used as a weapon of war. Hundreds were killed, tens of thousands more lost everything as they were forced to flee their homes.

Sadly, the medieval siege tactics employed were not unique to Aleppo, we are seeing them used again and again across Syria.

As many as 700,000 Syrians – nearly half of them children – remain under siege in 15 different parts of the country. Millions more have no regular access to the basic food, water and shelter they need to stay alive. Yet there is a very real risk that the barrel bombs, chlorine gas and indiscriminate violence that so shocked the world in Aleppo now becomes the new normal. We cannot become desensitised to such horrors.

Britain has repeatedly set the pace in responding to this crisis and our commitment remains unwavering. UK aid ensured blankets, medical care, clean water and food reached those fleeing Aleppo. Across Syria, our support continues to mean the difference between life and death to hundreds of thousands more. We have pledged more than £2.3 billion to support those affected by the conflict, our largest ever response to a single humanitarian crisis.

At the same time, we continue to call on all parties to the conflict to implement fully the ceasefire announced by Russia, Turkey and Iran and to allow aid to be delivered to all of those in need. Since the ceasefire began, only one besieged area has been reached by an aid convoy. That is unacceptable.

Ultimately, only a genuine and inclusive political settlement can deliver a lasting peace. But while we continue to push for that, the world must respond swiftly and generously to this new appeal in order to save lives of desperate Syrians. We must not let the depravities of this war become inevitable or give up hope. A new year brings a new chance for real, meaningful change and we must seize it.

ENDS

#### **Notes to editors**

1. Today's conference provided an opportunity to present the objectives, contents and achievements of the UN-led Regional Resilience and Refugee Plan (3RP) to meet needs in Syria's neighbouring countries, as well as identifying the humanitarian and resilience priorities inside Syria. More detail is available here: <http://www.helsinki2017.org/>

2. The UK is at the forefront of the response to the Syria crisis, with life-saving humanitarian support reaching millions of people inside Syria and in neighbouring countries.
  3. The UK has pledged more than £2.3 billion to support those affected by the conflict, our largest ever response to a single humanitarian crisis. In 2016 the UK is the third largest bilateral contributor to the humanitarian response in Syria, and the second largest overall since the start of the response in 2012.
  4. For more information on the UK's humanitarian response, please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/factsheet-the-uks-humanitarian-aid-response-to-the-syria-crisis>
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## **News story: UK – South Africa joint trade statement**

Secretary of State for International Trade, Dr Liam Fox, and the South Africa Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, met in London today, Tuesday 24 January 2017, for bilateral talks.

The meeting was a continuation of the ongoing high-level engagement between the United Kingdom and South Africa (SA) to discuss trade and economic relations and follows the recent visit of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to South Africa in December 2016.

Bilateral trade in goods and services between the UK and South Africa stood at £7.6 billion in 2015, with UK exports of goods and services increasing by 25% in the last decade. South Africa's exports into the UK have increased by over 5% on an annual basis for the last decade. South Africa is the third biggest trading partner for the UK in the Commonwealth. The meeting was an opportunity for ministers to discuss existing links as well as opportunities to further develop these.

Both ministers committed to strengthening ties as the UK prepares to leave the European Union and to work together to identify trade and investment opportunities that will benefit not only the UK and South Africa, but across the wider southern Africa and Africa region.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, said

South Africa is a key trading partner to the UK – a long-standing, strong and strategic ally for the United Kingdom in Africa and internationally. It is our largest export market in Africa; the largest economy in the southern Africa region and a fellow G20 member. South Africa is also the largest recipient of UK foreign direct investment in Africa accounting for 30% of total UK foreign

direct investment (FDI) in 2014, a value of £13.1 billion.

As we become an even more outward looking country, we will continue building on our relationship with South Africa and today's meeting was an opportunity to discuss how we progress that.

Minister for Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, said:

The UK is a historical and strategic trade and investment partner for South Africa and remains a key market especially for agriculture exports accounting for over 20% of SA's exports of wine and 30% of fruit exports globally. The UK is the biggest destination in the EU for South African investment, accounting for 30% of SA investments into Europe. Furthermore, 46% of SA's global investment originates from the UK.

We must ensure that we have a predictable trade and investment environment for mutual benefit for both parties. As we work to achieve this, South Africa looks forward to discussing how our trade post-Brexit could build on the recently concluded Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU.

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## **[Press release: Planned roadworks in East Midlands: weekly summary for Monday 23 January to Sunday 29 January 2017](#)**

Media wanting information about Highways England's routine maintenance projects should, in the first instance, check our website.

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 20 January but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

### **M1 junction 28 to 35a, Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire/Yorkshire: smart motorway**

Until winter 2016, there will be various restrictions in place on the M1

between junctions 28 and 35a to allow for the construction of the smart motorway. These include lane closures, speed restrictions, hard shoulder running and overnight slip road or carriageway closures.

This week, the following closures will be in place:

- Monday 23 January, the northbound entry and exit slip roads at junction 31 and the northbound exit slip road at junction 33, will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am
- Tuesday 24 January, the southbound entry and exit slip roads at junction 29, the northbound entry and exit slip roads at junction 30, the northbound exit slip road at junction 33, the southbound entry slip road at junction 33, the southbound exit slip road at junction 32 and the northbound exit slip road at junction 35 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am
- Wednesday 25 January, the northbound entry and exit slip roads at junction 29, the northbound entry and exit slip roads at junction 30, the southbound exit slip road at junction 32 and the northbound exit slip road at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am
- Thursday 26 January, the northbound entry and exit slip roads at junction 29a, the southbound entry and exit slip road at junction 31 and the southbound entry slip road at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am
- Friday 27 January, the Woodall Motorway Service Area entry and exit slip roads, the southbound entry and exit slip road at junction 30, the southbound entry and exit slip road at junction 33 will all be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am
- Saturday 28 January, the southbound up and over at junction 34 and the southbound junction 33 up and over will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am

Diversions will be clearly signposted.

## **M1 junction 19, Leicestershire: road improvement scheme**

On Monday 23, Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 January, the A14 to M1 northbound link road together with lane 1 of the A14 westbound leading to it, lane 1 of the A14 westbound from junction 2 to junction 1 and lane 1 of the M1 northbound through junction 19 will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am.

On Thursday 26 and Friday 27 January, lane 1 of A14 westbound together with the A14 to M1 northbound link road, the A14 eastbound from Catthorpe junction to junction 1, lanes 2 and 3 of the M6 southbound together with the M6 to A14 eastbound link road, lane 1 of the M1 southbound together with the M1 to A14 eastbound link road and lane 1 of the M1 northbound through junction 19 will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am. In all cases diversion routes will be clearly signposted.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.