

PROROGATION SPEECH – TUESDAY 1 MAY 2012

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

My Government's legislative programme has been based upon the principles of freedom, fairness and responsibility. My ministers have made it their paramount priority to reduce the deficit and restore economic growth. To this end legislation has been enacted to establish the Office of Budget Responsibility and legislation has been introduced to reform the financial services sector.

My Government has set out plans to restore the public finances to a sustainable position and meet its fiscal targets.

The Duke of Edinburgh and I were pleased to visit Canada and also Australia to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth.

We received a warm welcome on our State Visits to the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Republic of Ireland and on our visit to the United States. We were glad to welcome his Holiness the Pope, His Highness the Emir of Qatar, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Turkey and the President of the United States of America on their visits to the United Kingdom.

To mark the Diamond Jubilee, city status will be bestowed on Chelmsford, Perth and St. Asaph and the City of Armagh will be granted a Lord Mayoralty. The Duke of Edinburgh and I intend to travel across the United Kingdom and my family will travel throughout the Commonwealth to take part in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Legislation has been passed in advance of the Olympic and Paralympic Games which are to be held in London later this year.

Legislation has been passed with regard to my armed forces who continue to serve valiantly in Afghanistan and other places across the globe.

My Government has worked to address the threat of Iranian nuclear proliferation and to help build a stable Afghanistan.

My Government has worked to stem the violence in Syria and to support political and economic freedom in Libya, Egypt and Tunisia.

Legislation has been enacted to reform the constitutional arrangements of the United Kingdom, including an Act to establish fixed parliamentary terms of five years. Legislation has been passed to empower local communities, to provide for elected mayors and to establish elected police commissioners in England and Wales.

My ministers have worked to restore trust in political institutions and have sought to rebalance the relationship between the state and the citizen. In pursuance of this aim existing regulatory burdens have been reviewed and legislation has been passed to repeal unnecessary laws and to abolish identity cards.

Legislation has been enacted to ensure that Parliament and citizens are involved in any proposals to transfer powers to the European Union. Measures have been passed to reform legal aid and the sentencing of offenders.

Reform of the public services has been a priority for my ministers. To this end, legislation has been enacted to reform the National Health Service, postal services and other public services. My Government has also taken forward policies aimed at encouraging greater individual and social responsibility.

Legislation has been enacted to provide teachers with greater freedom over the curriculum, to help more schools establish academy status and to allow new providers to run state schools.

Legislation has been enacted to reform pensions and the welfare system. My Government established a Commission to consider wider reforms to public sector pensions and has committed itself to bringing forward legislation to implement the findings of that Commission. An Act has been passed to make fair and transparent payments to Equitable Life policy holders.

My Government has championed efforts to tackle climate change and legislation has been passed to improve energy efficiency and security.

My ministers have worked to foster a strong working relationship with the devolved administrations. Legislation has been enacted to strengthen the devolution settlement in Scotland. In Wales, a Commission has been established to examine the Welsh devolution settlement. My Government is committed to working closely with the Northern Ireland Executive to rebalance the economy and build a shared future in Northern Ireland.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS:

I thank you for the provisions which you have made for the work and dignity of the Crown and for the public services

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.