

Communique: UK-Poland Inter-Governmental Consultations

We, the Prime Ministers of the UK and Poland, chaired the second round of our Inter-Governmental Consultations in Warsaw today.

Last year we committed to transforming our strong partnership into a great, strategic relationship. We have today taken stock of our progress, and agreed to further develop cooperation between the UK and Poland over the coming year.

Today the UK-Polish relationship is at its strongest in living memory – a genuine strategic partnership that is broad, vibrant and diverse. We work closely together bilaterally, in multi-lateral organisations - including in NATO, and, from January 2018, on the United Nations Security Council. Trade between our two nations has reached £17 billion a year.

UK exports of goods and services to Poland have more than doubled since 2005, reaching £5.88 billion in 2016. UK imports of goods and services from Poland have more than tripled since 2005, reaching £11.45 billion in 2016.

A great number of Polish citizens have made their home in the UK, meaning our two nations are bound together by bonds of family and friendship. We work together, trade together, and our children go to school together. Our people-to-people links represent a great opportunity for coming generations to increase our prosperity and security. The British Council is also working to nourish these connections through encouraging collaborations and exchanges between our schools, universities and cultural institutions in both countries, often in partnership with the Polish Cultural Institute in London. A bilateral education working group has been established to act as a forum for exchanges between policymakers in areas such as language teaching, qualifications, curriculum materials, citizenship and equality.

We were pleased to recall today the agreement reached by the European Council and the UK last week to safeguard the rights of Polish citizens living in the UK, and UK citizens living in Poland, whose contributions in our respective countries are hugely valued. It means that Polish and other EU citizens living lawfully in the UK and UK nationals living lawfully in Poland and the rest of the EU at the point of the UK's exit will have their rights enshrined in law and enforced by courts. They will be able to go on living their lives as before.

The UK and Poland's bilateral relationship will continue to thrive and grow. We agreed today that we will be ambitious, building on the achievements of the last year while diligently searching for new dynamic projects to work together on in the future.

Today we have agreed:

- To sign a Bilateral **Defence and Security Cooperation Treaty**, only the second defence treaty that the UK has with an EU Member State. This is an important landmark in our defence relationship, which will provide a strategic framework through which we will progress defence industry collaboration and technology development through a **Defence Capability and Industrial Dialogue**. Both reflect our strong shared commitment to NATO as the cornerstone of our defence and underscore the UK's unwavering commitment to European security after Brexit. In this regard, the UK and Poland will continue to champion greater EU-NATO cooperation to ensure coherence and non-duplication between NATO and the EU. We are also working together to counter Russian disinformation, ensure cyber security, strengthen

resilience of the Eastern Partnership Countries to internal and external threats, as well as reinforce the reforms and development of the Western Balkans in line with EU standards.

- To work together to tackle the shared threats of modern slavery, human trafficking and organised crime, including greater regional coordination and cooperation and work with the Polish communities vulnerable to exploitation upstream and in the UK. Poland today endorsed PM May's Call to Action to end Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. We will seek to maintain the closest possible co-operation on matters of law enforcement and national security as the UK prepares to leave the EU.
- That 2018 will be a UK/Poland **year of Entrepreneurship, Science and Innovation**, extending our cooperation to support tech start-ups in Fintech, Cyber Security and personalised healthcare through a Warsaw-London Bridge programme; holding the UK-Poland Science forum in the second half of 2018; arranging the first meeting of our space agencies; exploring cooperation on civil nuclear; working together on industrial strategy; supporting UK Universities like Coventry who are working closely with their Polish counterparts. We will also work together on clean growth including on climate change as Poland prepares to host COP 24.
- To establish a **UK-Poland Business, Trade and Investment Council** to facilitate business-to-business dialogue and create an even more supportive environment for business in both countries, drawing on the skills and talents of the Polish diaspora in the UK. One such area is growing the links between our financial services industries, including in innovative new areas such as Fintech.

These will build on the strong work we've done together since the last Inter-Governmental Consultations, including notably:

- **Deployment of 150 UK armed forces personnel** to Poland as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence and mutual engagement in the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force rotations – in 2017 led by the UK and in 2020 led by Poland.
- Boosting links between Polish and British think-tanks, entrepreneurs, academics, journalists, 3rd sector workers in the first Polish-British Belvedere Forum held in Warsaw in March 2017, with the next event in London in February 2018;
- Support for stability and reform in Ukraine, including through a **joint visit by our Foreign Ministers** to Kyiv.

Today's Inter-Governmental Consultations reflect the closeness of our relationship, and set the direction for our relationship over the coming year and beyond.

Our vision for the future is of a Poland-UK partnership that is a powerful force for good in Europe, the wider region and in the world. Today's agreements reflect our commitment to building a strong bilateral partnership that honours our past, reflects our current close ties, and builds this common future.

Today we have agreed that over the past year we have successfully transformed our strong partnership into a great strategic relationship. We committed to build on this even further over the coming year, and look forward to meeting in the UK for the third round of the Inter-Governmental Consultations in 2018.