



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

FCO Press Release: Honours for the best of Britain overseas

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) announces 72 awards for Britons in recognition of truly exceptional and outstanding service to Britain overseas.

The Diplomatic Service and Overseas New Year 2016 Honours List recognises extraordinary people in a range of fields. Health workers and medical staff who played a prominent role in the UK's response to the Ebola crisis are recognised as well as those who played a role in the First World War centenary celebrations.

Awards go to Christopher Peter Wheeldon who receives an OBE for promoting the interests and reputation of British classical and theatrical dance worldwide and Jacqueline Rose Ellick receives an MBE for her services to the environment and Turtle Group on Ascension Island.

Sir Simon McDonald, Head of the Diplomatic Service, said:

"I am glad to see so many people recognised for their outstanding work serving our country and leading the UK's humanitarian work overseas in the New Year 2015 Honours list. These awards are hard earned."

Examples of other recipients from this list include:

Omaru Badara SISAY

Consultant receives an OBE for services to the Ebola response in Sierra Leone

As Director of the Situation Room in the Sierra Leone National Ebola Response Centre, OB Sisay developed the country's first fully operational information management centre that informed the Ebola stakeholders of the situation on the ground as it unfolded. He ran the decision making infrastructure of the Ebola Response. He also created the Situation Room Academy - which trained over 600 Sierra Leoneans in information management and analysis tools, developed a mapping service run by Sierra Leoneans and introduced fleet management to ensure proper maintenance and oversight of vehicles donated by the UK and other partners. He forced stronger Sierra Leonean ownership of the response whilst also bringing the UK and other partners into strategic decision making through the introduction of Command and Coordination Group meetings. His leadership, vision, work ethic and ability to motivate made him a significant partner in assisting the UK's response to the Ebola outbreak and the fight to get Ebola to zero.

On receiving news of his award OB Sisay said: *"Fighting Ebola took some incredible work and sacrifice from over 40,000 Sierra Leoneans, African, British and many other people and organisations who stood up to it there and then. The only problem with the award is that my mum can't stop crying and praying! I am shocked and grateful."*

Collette Kallee

Health Care Worker receives an OBE for services to the Ebola response in Sierra Leone

As head of the medical team at the Ebola Treatment Centre, Collette has been responsible for setting up and managing the medical response to the Ebola outbreak in the Kambia District on a daily basis. She helped transform the treatment center through training, building the capacity of national staff and establishment of procedures making it safer for healthcare worker's. Her leadership, work ethic and resilience has been critical in the UK's commitment to getting zero cases and determination to create a resilient future for Sierra Leone.

On receiving news of her award Collette Kallee said: *On hearing the news of this award well I was amazed. I have felt extremely privileged to be able to be part of this response as a paramedic. I am incredibly humbled, not only to receive this award but to be part of team filled with such amazing and selfless people. It is a time many people including myself will never forget.*

David Iain Drummond BENNETT

Regional Supervisor, Turkey, Commonwealth War Graves Commission receives an MBE for services to the Gallipoli centenary commemorations

David Bennett has worked with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for 27 years ensuring war graves have been immaculately and sympathetically maintained for friends, families and descendents. As supervisor for 31 cemeteries and six memorials at Gallipoli, he was instrumental for ensuring they were protected and prepared to the highest standards for the globally broadcast First World War Centenary Commemorations attended by TRH The Prince of Wales and Prince Harry, and other Heads of State ensuring a fitting tribute to tens of thousands of British, ANZAC and Commonwealth casualties.

On receiving news of his award David Bennett said: *Following a very busy year in 2015, I was completely surprised to be told I would be awarded the MBE. This must count as the highlight of my career and a very proud moment.*

Tamara ROJO

Artistic Director of the English National Ballet receives a CBE for her services to ballet

Tamara Rojo is one of the most outstanding dancers of her generation. After more than a decade of being one of the Royal Ballet's most spectacular artists, she was appointed as Artistic Director and Principal Dancer of the English National Ballet in 2012. Under her leadership the company has flourished and continues to honour its commitment to touring the UK and overseas. Her belief in the importance of making the arts in general and dance, in particular, accessible to people from all walks of society has led her to contribute to the Arts Council East, Dance UK and the ICA.

On receiving news of her award Tamara Rojo said: *I am so honoured and humbled to receive this award. I owe so much to the UK already, it has given me so many opportunities and great fulfilment and happiness in my life, and this honour is a wonderful encouragement to continue to work for the Arts.*

Notes for editors:

For further information about the case studies or to arrange an **interview** please contact the FCO Press Office on 020 7008 3100.

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