



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Stephen Doughty MP

Minister of State for Europe, North
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Rt Hon. The Lord Ricketts GCMG GCVO
Chair, European Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
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Dear Lord Ricketts,

I am writing to update you following the Prime Minister's attendance at the European Political Community summit in Budapest, Hungary on 7 November. I am attaching the Written Ministerial Statement that the Foreign Secretary laid in the House of Commons and Baroness Chapman in the House of Lords.

The EPC in Budapest brought together European leaders for the fifth time to discuss shared challenges. After it was first included on the agenda at the EPC summit at Blenheim Palace this July, migration is now established as an area of focus for the EPC. The Prime Minister chaired a roundtable discussion on the subject, calling for increased international cooperation in targeting the gangs who profit from people smuggling and the need for a 'whole-of-route' approach. He also highlighted £75m of recently announced additional funding for the UK's Border Security Command and bilateral initiatives to tackle organised immigration crime in cooperation with Western Balkans countries.

EPC meetings are important moments to reiterate the continent's support for Ukraine. In a meeting with President Zelenskyy, the Prime Minister highlighted a new package of 56 sanctions targeting Russia's military-industrial complex and Russian-backed mercenary groups, which the Foreign Secretary announced earlier that day. Showing support for Moldova was also high on the Prime Minister's agenda in Budapest, against the backdrop of recent Russian electoral interference. The Prime Minister attended the second leader-level meeting of European Friends of Moldova, chaired by re-elected Moldovan President Sandu, and underlined the UK's continued support for Moldova and its democratic institutions. Leaders from France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Romania and the Presidents of the EU Commission and European Council also attended.

Beyond the formal agenda, the Prime Minister continues to value the EPC for the opportunity it provides to discuss important issues directly with European leaders. In addition to bilaterals with Presidents Sandu and Zelenskyy, the Prime Minister met the leaders of Albania, Denmark, Czechia, Finland, Ireland, Kosovo, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Serbia, as well as EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Following our experience of hosting the Blenheim EPC, UK officials engaged with Hungarian counterparts to share lessons learnt ahead of Hungary's summit. We will do the same with Albania, who will host the next EPC in the first half of 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "Stephen Doughty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen Doughty MP
Minister of State for Europe, North America and UK Overseas Territories

Statement made by Mr David Lammy, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs on 18 November

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords by Baroness Chapman of Darlington

Statement

On Thursday 7 November, the Prime Minister attended the European Political Community summit in Budapest, Hungary. Four months after the UK hosted the EPC at Blenheim Palace, 48 leaders from across the continent gathered to discuss our shared challenges, and how better to work together to respond to them, with a focus on European security and support to Ukraine; tackling organised immigration crime; and bolstering European economic security and connectivity. The Minister of State for the Cabinet Office accompanied the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister called for increased international co-operation in tackling the gangs who profit from organised immigration crime, and highlighted £75m of recently announced additional funding for the UK's Border Security Command. He chaired the leaders' roundtable discussion on migration, attended by Croatia, Denmark, Greece, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the President of the European Council. To advance our collaboration with key European partners in the fight against organised immigration crime, the Prime Minister agreed new bilateral initiatives with Serbia, Kosovo and North Macedonia, which will further intelligence sharing and operational cooperation.

In a meeting with President Zelenskyy, the Prime Minister reiterated our unwavering support for Ukraine – highlighting the UK's new package of 56 sanctions targeting Russia's military-industrial complex and Russian-backed mercenary groups. The sanctions directly target the supply of Russian military equipment crucial to carrying out Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. The Prime Minister condemned in the strongest possible terms the DPRK's direct support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, emphasising this was proof of Putin's growing desperation.

Attending the second leader-level meeting of European Friends of Moldova, chaired by re-elected Moldovan President Sandu, the Prime Minister underlined the UK's continued support to Moldova in the face of significant disruption from Russia during their recent elections. Leaders from France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania and the Presidents of the EU Commission and European Council also attended.

The Prime Minister also met a range of European leaders, including those from Albania, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Kosovo, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Serbia, as well as EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. With Polish Prime Minister Tusk, he discussed the mutual desire to step up cooperation on defence, and agreed to work more closely to tackle organised immigration crime. With Czech Prime Minister Fiala, he welcomed the recently announced investment by Czech company CEZ into Rolls Royce SMR, which will boost our shared nuclear power ambition and support British industry. With President von der Leyen, he discussed the UK/EU partnership and the need to work together to tackle shared challenges.

The EPC will next meet in Albania in the first half of 2025.