Statement by

Rt. Hon. Justine Greening, MP
Secretary of State for International Development

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Chancellor of the Exchequer

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93rd Meeting of the Development Committee

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The Bank’s Future and Global Goals

The UK welcomes the important role the World Bank Group has played as a premier development finance institution. The Bank provided notable support to the development community to achieve the successes of the Millennium Development Goals and agreement on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through use of its resources and technical and intellectual expertise. It is important that the Bank now turns its attention to working with partner institutions, countries and other donors to implement the new UN Global Goals.

Forward Look

With changing needs, a growing range of options available to countries and even more ambitious international objectives outlined in the Global Goals, the Bank needs to keep evolving its offer to ensure that it remains the pre-eminent development finance institution, delivering sustainable impact for its clients.

We need to provide the right offer for the right country, firstly by ensuring that resources are allocated to where they are most needed, at the right price. Those countries that are facing acute challenges require renewed attention. This includes those that continue to be faced with the deepest levels of poverty and fragility, as well as those that are seeing recent economic gains at risk of being eroded in the face of the global commodity price downturn, conflict and its spill-overs or climate shocks. Others are making rapid progress and have appetite to borrow more at higher rates. All countries, not least the richer borrowers, want more tailored advice and instruments. The Bank should be positioned to respond to these varying demands.

In parallel to this, improving the business model of the Bank will be important to ensuring that it continues to remain highly competitive, not only in terms of building on the comparative advantage of its high quality and highly prized knowledge and advisory services, but also in increasing its responsiveness and agility. We welcome the strong emphasis on this, and urge a focus not only on simplification, but also on accelerating a risk-based management approach. This is important everywhere, including in Fragile and Conflict Affected States, where the need for strong engagement and adaptive, flexible programming is key to success.
With its expertise, the Bank is well placed to influence, crowd in and underwrite vastly greater private flows to developing countries. We want to see all parts of the World Bank Group work together to tackle the barriers to economic transformation with a major push on creating more jobs in the poorest and most fragile countries. We welcome the stated ambition of the Billions to Trillions paper, and look forward to the Forward Look translating this into a clear plan.

Finally, we need to identify how the Bank’s comparative advantage can be leveraged to achieve sustainable development impact on the global and regional issues of the next fifteen years. The Bank has a real comparative advantage in providing incentives and support to countries to prevent problems at source, and to manage inter-generational and transboundary issues.

We are comfortable that the areas outlined in the interim report presented to Governors capture these priorities, and look forward to contributing to develop these into concrete reform plans in the coming months.

World Humanitarian Summit, Forced Displacement and Disaster Risk Management

This year offers a unique opportunity to ensure that the global community is better able to reach those living in the most politically and environmentally fragile places, who are at greatest risk of being left behind. The World Humanitarian Summit and the September migration events in New York provide opportunities to address some of the greatest challenges to development, by finding better ways of preventing, responding and recovering from man-made and natural disasters.

The Bank has a critical role to play in this. We welcome the President’s leadership in forging a new alliance between the humanitarian community and development finance institutions, and urge him to continue working to break down silos and build a more effective system.

Forced displacement is a critical example of an issue where development organisations have a major role to play. The Syria Conference in London led to a bold new international deal for Jordan, pioneered by the Prime Minister - with similar proposals for Lebanon and Turkey - that will see investment in jobs and livelihoods for refugees and local people. This brought cutting edge development solutions to bear on problems that have often been treated as solely humanitarian. We must now deliver similar deals for refugees and host communities in other parts of the world - including by drawing on the Bank’s expertise and finance – while keeping up our support for Jordan and Lebanon.

In other aspects of crisis the Bank also has important expertise to offer. The Bank is active in a range of areas from social protection to disaster risk response, enabling partner countries to prevent, prepare and respond to crises of many sorts. Our priority is to see these diverse areas of expertise used in the round, to ensure the Bank has a coherent offer which helps client identify the range of risks they face, and layer different forms of financing in order to manage those risks most effectively.

Corruption

Accountable public institutions matter for eliminating extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Tackling corruption will be critical for the international community to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and the World Bank plays an important role in the political dialogue on how to address this challenge. We welcome President Kim’s participation in the Prime-Minister’s Anti-corruption summit in May as part of this longer-term international partnership. We urge the World Bank, in collaboration with the IMF, to assess how they can strengthen their tools, policies, and processes to help national authorities to diagnose and tackle the complex causes of corruption, to weed out corrupt practices and to build stronger institutions.
**Gender**

Though there has been significant attention paid to women’s access to resources and the need to remove barriers to women’s employment, we still have a huge task ahead of us in engaging the global community to recognise the critical role women can play in economic growth.

The High Level Panel recognises that international financial institutions will play an important role in mobilising change - the Bank’s gender strategy is therefore hugely significant. The key challenge will be to implement its gender strategy effectively across the one World Bank Group through strong leadership and sufficient resources and technical support to deliver real change at the country level. The High Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment was established by the Secretary General. Alongside the SoS for International Development, the World Bank and IMF are part of the panel; the World Bank strategy and the High Level Panel must reinforce each other and the recommendations of the Panel must be integrated into the IDA 18 policy commitments on gender equality.

**Leave no one behind**

Finally, it is important in our ever-changing and complex world that we take an inclusive approach, ensuring opportunities for all. It is therefore vital that the global community comes together to exchange ideas and identify expectations to ensure no one is left behind as we implement the Global Goals.

“Leave no one behind” is a lot more than a slogan. It is vital to unlocking long-term economic growth, and meeting the challenge for tens of millions of young people in countries that are either failing or that have failed on their governance responsibilities.

Acting on the principle of leave no one behind will be fundamental to achieving the ambition of the Global Goals. To this end, we appreciate the increasing engagement of World Bank Group staff in this area and we are keen to continue working in partnership to increase our collective efforts.