

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

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## Africa Programme

# UK Heads of Mission Series 2016

6, 7, 8 July 2016

## Schedule of Roundtables

### Wednesday 6 July

13.30 – 14.30	HE Catherine Inglehearn, Ambassador to <b>Guinea</b>
14.30 – 15.30	Mr Simon Shercliff, Deputy High Commissioner to <b>Nigeria</b>
15.30 – 16.30	HE Brian Olley, High Commissioner to <b>Cameroon</b> , and non-Resident Ambassador to <b>Chad, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon</b>
16.30 – 17.30	HE Judith Macgregor, High Commissioner to <b>South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland</b>

### Thursday 7 July

08.00 – 09.00	HE Nic Hailey, High Commissioner to <b>Kenya</b>
09.00 – 10.00	HE Dianna Melrose, High Commissioner to <b>Tanzania</b> and UK Representative to the <b>East African Community</b>
10.00 – 11.00	HE John Dennis, Ambassador to <b>Angola</b>
11.30 – 12.30	HE Joanna Kuenssberg, High Commissioner to <b>Mozambique</b>
12.30 – 13.30	HE Jon Benjamin, High Commissioner to <b>Ghana</b> and non-Resident Ambassador to <b>Togo, Benin and Burkina Faso</b>
14.30 – 15.30	HE George Hodgson, Ambassador to <b>Senegal</b> and non-resident Ambassador to <b>Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau</b>
16.30 – 17.30	HE William Gelling, High Commissioner to <b>Rwanda</b> and non-Resident Ambassador to <b>Burundi</b>
17.30 – 18.30	HE Alison Blackburne, High Commissioner to <b>Uganda</b>

### Friday 8 July

11.30 – 12.30	HE Catriona Laing, Ambassador to <b>Zimbabwe</b>
12.30 – 13.30	HE Harriet Mathews, Ambassador to <b>Somalia</b>
14.00 – 15.00	HE Michael Aron, Ambassador to <b>Sudan</b>
15.00 – 16.00	HE Tim Morris, Ambassador to <b>South Sudan</b>

## **SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Ambassador to Guinea, Catherine Inglehearn**



Catherine Inglehearn was appointed Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea in June 2015.

Ms Inglehearn joined the FCO in 1990 and until recently was Deputy Head of the East and West Africa Department. Her FCO career has included a wide range of roles covering Africa and Eastern Europe, as well as energy-related issues with postings to Kazakhstan, Slovenia and Italy.

### **Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria, Simon Shercliff OBE**



Simon Shercliff has served as Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria since February 2014.

Mr Shercliff joined the FCO in 1998 after working for two years as a volunteer teacher in Tanzania. His first posting was as a political officer in the British Embassy in Iran from 2000 to 2003. Following a short period in London, he was then deployed to Baghdad as the Private Secretary to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the Prime Minister's Special Representative for Iraq, a posting for which he was awarded an OBE.

He returned to London in 2004 as a spokesman for Iran and Iraq issues at the FCO Press Office, becoming the Chief Press Officer, then the Foreign Secretary's Press Secretary. He worked on counter-proliferation issues in Washington DC in 2006 and was deployed to the British Embassy in Afghanistan from November 2007 to February 2008. In 2011, he returned to the FCO as Deputy Head of the South Asia Department, and in 2012 was promoted to Head the FCO Counter Terrorism Department.

**High Commissioner to Cameroon and non-Resident Ambassador to Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Central African Republic, Brian Olley**



Brian Olley has been High Commissioner to Cameroon and non-Resident Ambassador to Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Central African Republic since September 2013.

Mr Olley joined the FCO in 2002 and until August 2013 was Deputy High Commissioner in Cyprus. His FCO career has covered a wide range of roles including working in Afghanistan and Finland. Mr Olley started his career in Her Majesty's Forces where he served in New York (on secondment to the United Nations), Hong Kong, Nepal, Germany, Canada and the UK.

**High Commissioner to South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland, Judith Macgregor CMG LVO**



Judith Macgregor has been High Commissioner to South Africa since October 2013.

She joined the FCO in 1976, after graduating from Oxford University with a first class Honours degree in Modern History. She has served as First Secretary in Paris and Prague, Deputy Director of Department for Western Europe and Head of the FCO Security Department. She was also Migration Director from 2007 to 2009 and British Ambassador to Mexico from October 2009 to June 2013.

Mrs Macgregor has previously served as Ambassador to Slovakia from 2004 to 2007. Between 1995 and 2000, she accompanied her husband to his diplomatic posts in Dusseldorf and Warsaw. Mrs Macgregor is the President of the FCO Women's Association.

### **High Commissioner to Kenya, Nic Hailey**



Nic Hailey has been British High Commissioner to Kenya since December 2015.

Prior to taking up his current position he was the Director of Africa at the FCO. In that role he had responsibility for all UK policy towards, and operations in, 48 African countries.

Mr Hailey joined the FCO in 1997. He has held positions including Deputy Ambassador to Afghanistan, Head of the Strategy, Communication and Training Department at the Consular Directorate, Speech Writer for the UK Foreign Secretary and Private Secretary to Her Majesty's Ambassadors in France and Germany. He also served on secondment to the École Nationale d'Administration.

### **High Commissioner to Tanzania, Dianna Melrose**



Dianna Melrose has been High Commissioner to the United Republic of Tanzania since February 2013. She is also the UK representative to the East African Community (EAC). Ms Melrose was Ambassador to Cuba between 2008 and 2012. She joined the FCO in 1999 and has worked as Head of the FCO Policy Planning Staff and Head of the South East Europe and European Union Enlargement Department.

Ms Melrose has extensive international development experience, and a longstanding interest in working closely with African partners to achieve positive change. She was seconded from the FCO to the Department for International Development (DFID) to develop the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative in 2002. Ms Melrose also built on her FCO experience to work with governments, the mining industry and NGOs to tackle the problem of conflict diamonds as part of the Kimberley Process. As Head of DFID's International Trade department from 2003 to 2006, Ms Melrose focused on improving the terms of trade for developing countries and developing the Aid for Trade initiative.

Before joining the FCO she was Policy Director of Oxfam GB and spent much of her career building Oxfam's policy and international advocacy. She has written a number of books, including *Bitter Pills: Medicines and the Third World Poor*. She has also worked for the British Council and in the private sector.

**Ambassador to Angola and non-Resident Ambassador to São Tomé and Príncipe, John Dennis**



Mr Dennis has been the Ambassador to Angola since February 2014.

He joined the FCO in 1981 and since then he has worked on African, Asian and commercial affairs, with a range of overseas postings. He previously led the FCO Department with responsibility for southern and central Africa.

Mr Dennis has also spent time on secondment to the private sector.

**High Commissioner to Mozambique, Joanna Kuenssberg**



Joanna Kuenssberg has been High Commissioner to Mozambique since April 2014.

She was also Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Lisbon and worked in the Foreign Office Strategy Unit after managing a project to improve services for British nationals overseas. Prior to this, she led the FCO team handling anti-corruption and other policy matters relating to the private sector. This followed 9 years of European Union work in a number of different capacities. Ms Kuenssberg worked on EU and economic issues at the British Embassy in France and served on secondments to the EU Services of the French and Hungarian Foreign Ministries. She also worked on EU enlargement issues at the FCO and the European Commission. She began her career at the British Department of Environment in 1995.

**High Commissioner to Ghana and non-Resident Ambassador to Togo, Benin and Burkina Faso, Jon Benjamin**



Jon Benjamin has been the High Commissioner to Ghana since 2014.

Mr Benjamin joined the FCO in 1986. Prior to his position in Ghana, he was the British Ambassador to Chile. Mr Benjamin previously served in New York, Washington, Ankara and Jakarta. He has also worked in several FCO positions, including as Chief of Staff to the FCO Minister with responsibility for the EU and Latin America, Head of the Zimbabwe Emergency Unit, Deputy Head of the Drugs and International Crime Department and Head of the Human Rights Policy Department.

Mr Benjamin holds degrees in German, Swedish and International Relations, and has a strong background in human rights.

**Ambassador to Senegal and non-resident Ambassador to Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau, George Hodgson**



George Hodgson has been British Ambassador to Senegal and non-resident Ambassador to Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau since July 2015.

Mr Hodgson joined the FCO in 2002 and has held a number of positions in London and overseas. Prior to his appointment as Ambassador to Senegal, he served as Head of the FCO Ebola Taskforce, working with governments in West Africa and international partners to eliminate Ebola in the region. He previously worked on a range of European issues in London and Brussels and on political and security issues in South Asia, Kabul, Islamabad and Washington.

**High Commissioner to Rwanda and British Ambassador Burundi, William Gelling OBE**



William Gelling was appointed as High Commissioner to Rwanda in January 2014.

Mr Gelling joined the FCO in 2001. He was previously the Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary, advising on the Middle East, Africa, the UN and the Commonwealth.

Prior to this Mr Gelling led the team responsible for negotiations with Iran over its nuclear programme. He was also posted to Baghdad as a Liaison Officer between the British Embassy and the Multinational Military Headquarters, and worked on political, conflict and extremism issues in Pakistan. Mr Gelling was attached to the British Trade Office in India.

He received an OBE in 2013 for services to British foreign policy.

**High Commissioner to Uganda, Alison Blackburne**



Alison Blackburne has been the High Commissioner to Uganda since August 2012.

She joined the FCO in 1987 and has held posts in London and abroad. She previously served in Warsaw, Stockholm, Harare, at the UK Permanent Mission to the United Nations and at the UK Permanent Representation to the European Union, as well as more recent short-term attachments to Jakarta and Washington. Ms Blackburne spent two years on secondment to the UK Ministry of Justice as Principal Private Secretary to the Justice Secretary.

**Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Catriona Laing CB**



Catriona Laing CB has been Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe since September 2014.

Ms Laing joined the FCO in January 2012 when she was posted to Afghanistan. She is an economist by background and has spent much of her career in Africa working in Botswana, Kenya, Sudan and Somalia.

**Ambassador to Somalia, Harriet Mathews OBE**



Harriet Mathews OBE has been Ambassador to the Republic of Somalia since June 2015.

Ms Mathews joined the FCO in 1997. Prior to her current role, she headed the FCO Ebola Task Force. Ms Mathews is an Africa specialist and has held three FCO positions related to the continent, including the role of Head of the East and West Africa Department. Ms Mathews has also been the FCO Head of Energy and has worked in Brazil, Israel and Afghanistan. She was awarded an OBE in 2005 for her work on West Africa.

### **Ambassador to Sudan, Michael Aron**



Mr Michael Aron has served as Ambassador to the Republic of Sudan since August 2015.

After studying Arabic at Leeds University and before joining the FCO in 1984, Mr Aron worked as an English teacher in northern Sudan for two years. Since then, his FCO career has focused on the Middle East and North Africa, and he has held roles as Ambassador to Kuwait, Iraq, and, most recently, Libya.

**Ambassador to South Sudan, Timothy Morris**



Mr Tim Morris has been Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan since April 2015.

Mr Morris joined the FCO in 1981 and has served in London, Tokyo, Lisbon and Madrid. He was most recently the Ambassador to Morocco and non-resident Ambassador to Mauritania, and has also served as the FCO Sahel Coordinator. Mr Morris was the UK Special Envoy to the South Sudan peace talks and Chargé d’Affaires ad interim to the Democratic Republic of Congo.