

## Dr Lee makes keynote speech on UK's role in the Middle East

On Monday 30th November, Dr Phillip Lee, the MP for Bracknell made the opening speech in a highly topical and well-attended debate in the House of Commons on the subject of the UK's role in the Middle East. Dr Lee, who is the Vice Chairman of the Conservative Middle East Council (CMEC), spoke widely on the subject, including the UK's historical ties in the region and the need for a coherent and comprehensive strategy towards the Middle East.

He also voiced his support for the Prime Minister's proposal to extend air operations into the Daesh controlled spaces of Eastern Syria. Dr Lee said *"The threat from ISIS is clear and present, the legal justification for action is strong and it is right that Britain should play a leading role with its allies in eradicating ISIS/Daesh from the face of the earth."* The full speech can be read here: [Hansard](#) and watched here: [Parliament TV](#)



**Dr Phillip Lee opening the debate on the UK's role in the Middle East**

## Active in Parliament

### Government motion to extend air operations into Syria

On Wednesday 2nd December, Dr Phillip Lee voted in support of a House of Commons motion to extend UK air operations against Daesh into Syria. The Government motion was voted through the House of Commons with a majority of 174. Speaking in the House of Commons, Dr Lee said: *"I support the Prime Minister's proposal to extend air strikes into the ungoverned space of Eastern Syria ... I regard the current circumstances — in which the RAF can find a foe but not destroy it — as nonsense. The threat from ISIS is clear and present, the legal justification for action is strong, and it is right that Britain should play a leading role with its allies in eradicating ISIS/Daesh from the face of the earth."*

On extending air operations into Syria, he added *"We should help to eradicate groups of people anywhere who abuse authority in order to behead children, systematically rape women, kill people whose religious views or ways of life are not the same as their own, and whose extortion, terror and hatred makes it impossible for people to live in the territory they control, and those who commit murder and spread terror in other parts of the world."*

Dr Lee also voiced his support for a regional strategy towards the whole Middle East *"We must consider our 10,20 and 30 year priorities — as well as any immediate threats. I have long believed that we need a Middle East strategy similar to that rightly commissioned by the PM towards the Gulf States."*

### Dr Lee questions the Foreign Secretary

On the 24th November, in the build up towards the debate on the UK's role in the Middle East and in anticipation of a vote on extending air operations into Syria, Dr Lee asked the Foreign Secretary, Phillip Hammond, the following question: *"Does the Foreign Secretary agree that in order that we play a constructive role in dealing with ISIS and other instabilities in the region we need a comprehensive strategy towards the middle east as a whole, not just Syria?"*

In response, the Foreign Secretary replied: *"Yes, I do agree. The Government are working up a Gulf strategy looking at how the UK will engage with this very important region—important for our security and for our prosperity as well—over the next five to 10 years."*



**Meeting with Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce**

Dr Phillip Lee MP has welcomed the Prime Minister's pledge to give all UK homes and businesses access to fast broadband by 2020. The statement by David Cameron, committing to introduce a "universal service obligation" for broadband, came the day after the local MP told a meeting of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce that the broadband structure in this country is not good enough. He identified a primary cause of these failings being that we have a single private company responsible for most of its provision.

After hearing the PM's announcement, Dr Lee said: *"I am delighted by this new commitment to providing fast broadband across the country. The new high-speed rail services are important, however, the future will be more about fast data rather than fast people."* Elsewhere in his wide-ranging speech to business leaders from across the Thames Valley, Dr Lee supported the recent moves to strengthen our relationship with China, but stated that this must be on terms of mutual respect in areas such as internet security, protecting patents and intellectual assets.

**Dr Lee with the Chamber of Commerce****Dr Lee meets local charity Sebastian's Action Trust**

Bracknell MP, Dr Phillip Lee, has expressed his continued support for the work of Sebastian's Action Trust following a meeting with its Chief Executive Jane Gates. The Trust supports families of seriously-ill children from diagnosis, through to treatment and beyond. The Trust has a family outreach centre in Slough, as well as a purpose-built facility near Basingstoke which offers specialist breaks exclusively to the families of seriously ill children. The Trust was featured on this year's BBC Children in Need appeal, and plays an important role in the lives of the children and families it supports.

The meeting enabled Ms Gates to provide Dr Lee with an update on the Trust's work, during which he was pleased to hear about upcoming fundraising events, including the Santa Fun Run in December. You can find more details of the Trust's forthcoming activities on their website: <http://www.sebastiansactiontrust.org.uk>

Dr Lee commented, *"I was fortunate enough to be asked to open the Trust's shop in the centre of Bracknell earlier in the year, and so know of the good work that they do. Offering this type of respite centre can be a lifeline for parents with a seriously ill child."*

**Dr Lee with Sebastian's Action Trust's Jane Gates****Website of the month**

I receive a number of emails and letters a week regarding local train services. Improving the frequency and reliability of services has been one of my key local campaigns and I am pleased that the Department for Transport has opened a public consultation into the South Western franchise. This is an excellent opportunity for local commuters and passengers to have their say on the future of South West trains. You can find a link to the consultation document, including details of how to respond, here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/south-western-rail-franchise>

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