**Theresa May urges UN reform and threatens funding cut**

September 20, 2017

By: Greg Heffer

Sky News

http://news.sky.com/story/theresa-may-urges-un-reform-and-threatens-funding-cut-11045532

Theresa May has called on the United Nations to reform as she singled out North Korea, Russia, Syria and Myanmar for criticism in a wide-ranging speech.

The Prime Minister told the UN General Assembly in New York the organisation must change in order to "meet the challenges of the 21st century".

She warned Britain will make up to 30% of its £90m annual core funding for the UN's agencies conditional on their ability to show they are efficient and transparent, as the Prime Minister appeared to echo US President Donald Trump's own call for "truly bold reforms".

Mrs May said: "Those of us who hold true to our shared values, who hold true to that desire to defend the rules and high standards that have shaped and protected the world we live in, need to strive harder than ever to show that institutions like this United Nations can work for the countries that formed them, and for the people who we represent."

The Prime Minister sent strongly-worded messages to various states she accused of breaching UN rules.

Ahead of a bilateral meeting with Mr Trump, she chided the US for its stance on the Paris climate change agreement and offered a defence of free trade over protectionism.

Watched on by Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and International Development Secretary Priti Patel, Mrs May garnered a round of applause from the assembly as she vowed Britain "will never let anyone destroy our way of life" following recent terror attacks.

She urged UN members to "strike the generational blow against this vile evil in our world".

Mrs May also paid tribute to Pakistan's former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, who was assassinated 10 years ago this December and who introduced the PM to her husband Philip at Oxford University.

Having attacked states who are "deliberately flouting for their own gain the rules and standards that have secured our collective prosperity and security", Mrs May condemned Russia for vetoing UN action against the Syrian regime's "unforgivable" use of chemical weapons on its own people.

The Prime Minister told the UN Security Council it must be "prepared to take all necessary measures" to put pressure on North Korea ruler Kim Jong Un over his "outrageous" development of nuclear weapons.

And Mrs May also castigated Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi over the Rohingya Muslim refugee crisis in the southeast Asian country, which the UN has described as ethnic cleansing.

Immediately after her speech, Mrs May met with Mr Trump as the pair prepared to discuss trade, foreign policy and security.

Amid the possibility of a post-Brexit trade deal between their two countries, the President told Mrs May: "We will be doing a lot of trading with the UK and we look forward to it."

In the wake of the botched London Underground bombing at Parsons Green, the Prime Minister had criticised the President's "unhelpful" speculation over the attempted attack.

But, striking a more conciliatory tone on Wednesday, Mrs May hailed the UK-US relationship on security and defence as "the closest we have".

After the meeting, a Downing Street spokesperson revealed Mrs May had "reaffirmed the UK's strong commitment" to the Iranian nuclear deal as "vitally important for regional security".

Mr Trump has cast doubt on continuing the agreement, describing it as an "embarrassment" in his own speech to the UN on Tuesday.

The Prime Minister also lobbied the President over a US trade dispute that threatens jobs at Bombardier in Northern Ireland, the spokesperson added.