

Press release: Our vision for legal education

Public Legal Education (PLE) will be given a welcome boost following the launch of a PLE vision statement.

Solicitor General Robert Buckland QC MP will announce the vision today at the All-Party Parliamentary Group Public Legal Education and Pro Bono event.

Legal education is about ensuring people know about the law and their basic civil and criminal rights – from knowing if you’re entitled to a refund in a shop or whether you’ve been a victim of discrimination.

The statement creates a shared vision for the PLE community to aspire to which will help drive forward legal education initiatives. The statement reveals 7 goals for where PLE might be in 10 years’ time.

The goals are:

1. PLE will be supported by a robust evidence base, showing what the need is and what works best.
2. PLE will be of high quality, maintained to ensure that it remains accurate and accessible and useful for the people who need it.
3. PLE will be universal and reach across all demographics, prioritising children, young adults and vulnerable groups
4. PLE will be scaled up through delivery by the legal community
5. PLE will harness technology and be delivered through innovative methods, both on and offline
6. PLE will be embeded into public services and government departments
7. PLE will be understood as beneficial and utilised by other sectors

Speaking ahead of the launch, the Solicitor General said:

Teaching people about their legal rights and responsibilities, together with helping them gain the confidence and skills to get access to justice can really make a difference to people’s lives – as well as our legal system.

The new PLE vision statement creates a shared ideal for the legal education community to aspire to. Focusing all on one common goal – to encourage more people to help educate the public about their legal rights and responsibilities.

Our aim is to create a country where everyone, and every group, is able to access justice. Where nobody, no community, is denied their legal rights. This is why I’d like attendees to sign up to the

vision statement.

There are many ways to get involved in educating people about the law, such as interactive presentations, mock trials and role play exercises to awareness raising campaigns or information in leaflets – which can be tailored to different groups, from educating primary and secondary school pupils to prison inmates, community groups and homeless people.

Commenting on the statement, Michael Olatokun, Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law and James Sandbach, LawWorks said:

Public legal education can enhance knowledge of the law, empowering citizens and communities to give effect to their rights, remedies and responsibilities. The vision published today, developed by a broad range of stakeholders, provides a roadmap to deliver a society in which no-one is denied justice simply through ignorance of the law and the legal system. This is supported by the long-term goals of PLE. The APPG on Public Legal Education and Pro Bono in conjunction with the APPG on the Rule of Law will work alongside MPs and Peers to make the vision a reality.

The statement has been produced by PLE representatives including those from the following organisations: Citizenship Foundation, The Law Society, Bar Council, CILEX, Magistrates' Association, Ministry of Justice, Judicial Office, Solicitors Regulation Authority, Citizens Advice, Law for Life, Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law, Youth Access and Law Centres Federation.

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[News story: Government launches new national hate crime awareness campaign](#)

The campaign has been developed in consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime and other organisations, to help the public understand hate crime, particularly offences which often people do not recognise as criminal, such as some forms of online and verbal abuse.

This includes educating perpetrators who have been motivated by hostility towards the victim's race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability that they have committed a hate crime.

The strapline of the campaign sends a clear message about what hate crime is:

'If you target anyone with verbal, online or physical abuse because of their religion, race, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity – you may be committing a hate crime. It's not just offensive. It's an offence.'

Minister for Countering Extremism Baroness Williams said:

Committing a hate crime goes against all the shared values we hold and can have a traumatic impact on victims.

The campaign gives clear examples of hate crime and sends a message that not only is this behaviour unacceptable, it is a criminal offence.

This is just one part of the ongoing work of the government to tackle hate crime to ensure this sickening behaviour is stamped out.

The campaign goes live today (Wednesday 31 October) with adverts running on video-on-demand sites, social media and posters to be displayed across the country.

Each video or poster features a different offender, represented by an e-fit, and a hate crime taking place.

These include:

- a lesbian couple being verbally abused at a bar
- racist graffiti being sprayed on the shop of a foreign couple
- an offender posting hate-filled messages about a transgender woman online
- a Muslim woman being aggressively shouted at to remove her headscarf and a Jewish man being abused in the street
- a disabled man being verbally abused on a bus

The campaign seeks to reassure communities at risk of hate crime that the government takes this seriously and to publicly address the attitudes and beliefs that foster hate crime and re-establish boundaries around not targeting people on the basis of their identify.

The campaign website also signposts organisations where victims and witnesses can get the support they need.

Chris Long, Chief Crown Prosecutor and CPS hate crime champion, said:

Hate crime has a corrosive effect on society and being on the receiving end of an incident can be particularly distressing because of its personal nature.

The CPS works closely with the police to prosecute thousands of cases every year. More than two-thirds of offenders are now receiving tougher, uplifted sentences from the courts – the highest levels ever recorded.

We take hate crime very seriously and are committed to properly supporting victims. People should be in no doubt – if you believe you have been a victim of hate crime you should report it to the police.

Along with the CPS, the Home Office consulted with the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, which includes groups such as Stop Hate UK, Tell MAMA, Community Security Trust (CST), Stonewall and Galop.

Mike Ainsworth, chairman of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime and Director of London Services for Stop Hate UK, said:

We know 2 key facts about hate crimes. The impact on victims is devastating and life changing, and perpetrators often escalate in the seriousness of their offending.

This campaign is important in emphasising the corrosive impact these crimes have on communities.

The launch comes after statistics showed 94,098 hate crimes were recorded by police in England and Wales in the year to March 2018.

The campaign forms part of the government's wider programme of work to tackle hate crime. Earlier this month the government updated its [hate crime action plan](#), which included:

- asking the Law Commission to review hate crime legislation
- further funding for community groups to tackle hate crime
- extending the Places of Worship Security Scheme for a fourth year

[News story: Celtic Spirit report published](#)



MAIB's report on the cargo vessel Celtic Spirit dragging its anchor during heavy weather and subsequently colliding with the research and survey vessel Atlantic Explorer and the general cargo vessel Celtic Warrior, on the River Humber in March this year, is now published.

The report contains details of what happened and the subsequent actions taken: [read more](#).

Published 31 October 2018

[Speech: UK committed to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity](#)

Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you to the Under-Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General for briefing the Council today.

The United Kingdom is committed to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We do not and will not recognize Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. The illegal seizure of Crimea by Russia in March 2014 is in direct contravention of the UN Charter. The action threatens international peace and security and it has global consequences.

Mr President, if I may, I will address the issue of the election. Like my European and American colleagues, we do see these so-called elections as illegitimate. They are the latest example in the Russian campaign to destabilise Ukraine. They are a clear breach of the Minsk Agreements, and they're illegal under Ukrainian law. In plain speaking Mr President, they are a charade, and a grisly one at that.

This is why the United Kingdom with other Members of this Council called for this meeting today. The international community must stand together to condemn these illegal acts. Russia could demonstrate her commitment to the rules-based international system by using her considerable influence on the separatists to ensure that these so-called elections do not take place.

To be clear Mr President, if the elections were free and fair and with proper security conditions as stated in the Minsk Agreements, that would be a different matter. But the conditions for free and fair elections will not exist – will never exist – when Russia continues to deny international access to eastern Ukraine. Support for illegitimate so-called elections is the latest attempt by Russia to destabilise Ukraine.

As other representatives have done today Mr President, I'd now like to raise other recent actions that are deeply concerning.

Firstly as recorded by the Special Monitoring Mechanism, the increasing militarization of Crimea is nothing short of alarming. We urge Russia to desist from destabilising transfers of weapon systems and troops to the peninsula, and to demonstrate her commitment to regional stability.

Secondly, opening the Kerch bridge is yet another flagrant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty. Russia's systematic harassment and detention of both Ukrainian and third country flagged vessels in the Sea of Azov since April is yet another attempt to destabilise Ukraine and also its economy.

And thirdly, we are concerned by Russia's ongoing cyber-attacks on Ukraine which attempt to interfere with Ukraine's financial, energy and government sectors.

Mr President, I'll now turn to humanitarian issues. As the Assistant Secretary-General has demonstrated in her briefing, the humanitarian impact of this conflict continues to have a devastating effect for those that live on both sides of the line of contact. What we heard about mines, what we heard about injuries, what we heard about millions being at dire humanitarian risk ought to shock us. The lack of access for humanitarian organisations in non-government controlled areas is making a very large contribution to this crisis.

We strongly urge the Russian-backed separatists to grant safe and unhindered access so essential humanitarian assistance can be delivered to the 1.8 million people in need within non-government controlled areas. We also urge donors to respond to the annual UN Humanitarian Response Plan for Ukraine, which remains woefully under-funded.

In conclusion Mr President, we urge all sides, and particularly the Russian-backed separatists, to commit to full implementation of the Minsk Agreements, beginning with a comprehensive ceasefire and withdrawal of heavy weaponry. This is the best way to achieve stability for Ukraine and end suffering of the Ukrainian people.

To be clear, it was Russian aggression in 2014 that gave rise to this conflict with complete disregard for international law. Russia has a responsibility, particularly as a Permanent Member of this Council, to desist from destabilizing behaviour and to use its considerable influence on the separatists to ensure the Minsk Agreements are implemented and this conflict brought to an end.