

Official Statistics: Nursery Survey: 2018 Edition

This release contains estimates of sales of improved nursery stock by forest nurseries in Great Britain, reporting on sales to Scotland and on all sales of Sitka spruce and Scots pine.

Press release: UK aid will protect more than 820,000 people from threat of lethal landmines

New UK aid funded technology, including radar detectors, will help trace ammunition in the equivalent of more than 16,000 football pitches. Remote controlled machines, such as the Mine Wolf, will also help clear cluster bombs more rapidly.

Manufactured in Newcastle, the eight-tonne Mine Wolf is a remote-controlled mine-clearing machine used in high risk areas. It can clear up to 12,000 square metres a day.

Our support will also help train all-female demining teams, often in areas where many of the men have died in conflict. Hundreds of women from impoverished communities are being empowered through skills training in landmine clearance, vehicle mechanics and paramedic first aid to protect their communities.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

The crippling legacy of fear, mutilation and devastation, which landmines leave, must be wiped out for good.

UK expertise and innovation are helping to shield vulnerable people from these barbaric relics and liberating land contaminated by these devices. This will allow the poorest people to grow crops, walk their children to school without fear and ultimately give them back control over their lives.

The British public should feel immense pride in their critical contribution, at a time when unprecedented numbers of innocent people are dying as a result of these brutal indiscriminate killers.

This demining work will protect more than 820,000 people from the threat of barbaric relics across war-ravaged communities in Asia and Africa.

Working in partnership with local authorities, governments and through world-class UK organisations such as The HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), our support will train local men and women to identify and remove these deadly objects. These projects will boost local employment, recruiting men and women from communities where alternative job opportunities are severely limited.

UK support will also help educate a further 280,000 men, women and children about the dangers of landmines, an essential lifeline to safeguard entire communities from mutilation or death.

Chief Executive of the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) Jane Cocking said:

Global deaths and injuries from landmines have hit a ten-year high. Today, one person every hour is killed by a landmine and almost half are children.

These new funds will help us to rid some of the world's most conflict-affected countries of landmines, cluster munitions and other unexploded weapons at a crucial time, impacting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

As well as saving lives, this support will ensure vast areas of land can be returned to communities, improving lives and ensuring safe access to housing, education and medical facilities.

James Cowan, CEO, The HALO Trust:

The HALO Trust was founded exactly 30 years ago to free the world from the scourge of landmines for good. Today's announcement from DFID moves us closer to that day and it should be a source of immense pride that UK aid is playing a key role in its realisation.

Mine clearance is the very first step in creating stability, development and ultimately self-reliance for people whose lives continue to be blighted by conflicts long after they end. Thanks to British taxpayers, these people will now be able to live, learn and cultivate in safety.

This latest support is part of a UK commitment made at an event with HRH Prince Harry in April 2017 of £100 million support to make 150 square kilometres of land safe again over a three year period, benefiting at least 800,000 people.

This latest partnership with The HALO Trust, MAG, Norwegian People's Aid and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining is part of the £100

million commitment made last year and will support demining efforts across nine countries including;

Angola:

Over twenty years after Princess Diana's iconic walk through a landmine littered field, Angola still remains one of the most heavily contaminated countries in the world. Towns remain isolated due to mine threats and people are unable to return to their homes or farm land. UK support will enable communities to build houses on safe land, provide safe passage to schools and allow land to be used productively for farming.

Laos:

Laos remains plagued by high levels of unexploded ordnance and has some of the highest landmine casualty rates in the world. More than 40 years since the Vietnam conflict ended, contamination prevents communities from fully utilising their land which they depend upon to feed their children and earn a living. UK support will help make land safe for cultivation and hand back control to these often marginalized communities.

South Sudan:

South Sudan's crippling civil conflict has led to widespread contamination, with mines and brutal cluster bombs, blocking access to fertile land that many rely on to make a living. UK support will help ensure all hazardous areas in Terekeka State will be cleared of mines by the end of 2020. If successful it will be the first state to achieve this status. Thanks to UK taxpayers' contributions, land will be returned to impoverished local communities allowing them to farm again and feed their families.

Notes to Editors

Photos and B roll footage of the latest technology being used to clear mines, female deminers, and general footage of wider demining work can be [found here](#)

This £46 million support from the Global Mine Action Programme 2 is a new allocation from the existing £100 million announced last year. It will be delivered through The HALO Trust, MAG, Norwegian People's Aid and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. Through DFID's support, HALO & MAG will lead mine clearance, mine risk education and capacity development in Angola, Cambodia, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Burma, South Sudan, Laos, Lebanon and Vietnam.

DFID funding to HALO and MAG will provide support to National Mine Action Authorities (NMAAs) to help affected countries better manage their own response to contaminated land. This will ensure they have the skills and knowledge to regulate, coordinate and manage mine action more effectively, with minimal outside financial support. As well as building self-sufficiency, the projects will centre on local employment, recruiting staff from affected communities where alternative employment opportunities are limited.

Of the £100 million announced last year to tackle landmines across the globe,

£95 million has already been committed to projects including:

- An extension of the Global Mine Action Programme, which was delivered by The Halo Trust, MAG, Norwegian People's Aid and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining in Burma, Cambodia, South Sudan, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Laos, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.□
- A programme in Afghanistan led by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).□
- A programme in Iraq and another in Sudan both delivered by UNMAS.
- A programme in Yemen delivered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In addition to this, through UK Aid Match, the UK Government matched pound for pound £214,000 of public donations to MAG's demining 'Walk Without Fear' appeal. This doubled the impact and helped return land to almost 8,000 people in Angola.

[Speech: Need for a Durable Cessation of Hostilities in Tripoli](#)

Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you very much to the Special Representative both for your very sobering briefing but also for all your work on Libya and also through you, perhaps we could pass on thanks to your team.

I think the first point I'd like to make is to strongly condemn the violence, the escalation of violence in and around Tripoli that's caused many casualties and endangered the lives of innocent civilians. This doesn't help the Libyan people, but it also doesn't help the cause of Libya's stability. And while the results of mediation efforts reached yesterday in Tripoli by UNSMIL are very welcome, hopefully they will help us de-escalate the violence and ensure the protection of the civilians. But I think from what the SRSG said, it's very clear there's a lot more to be done and there are a lot of underlying factors that really need to be tackled.

I wanted to set out our very strong support for the SRSG. We need a durable cessation of hostilities in Tripoli. That's a critical step to advancing the political process in accordance with the UN Action Plan. We call on all parties to cease hostilities and abide by the ceasefire agreement brokered by the UN immediately. We reiterate our support for the President of the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord as they work with the UN to promote reconciliation and a Libyan-led political process. I think this is underscored even more by the events in Tripoli. A more inclusive political settlement will help bring greater stability to Libya. It is a truism, but the whole point of truisms is that they are correct. The Secretary-General's 24 August report on UNSMIL rightly highlights the need

for progress on the implementation of the UN Action Plan.

I also want to express UK support for elections this year. Elections are an important part of Libya's transition, but it will be necessary to ensure sufficient political, security and technical preparations are made so that they have the effect of uniting Libya. And it will be important to ensure a robust legal framework is in place and that there is sufficient political consensus to avoid exacerbating existing divisions in Libya.

The CT threat – of course that's a very important issue, but I just wanted to register our concern at the humanitarian situation in Derna and to emphasize the need to allow humanitarian access for the civilian population, and to say that those responsible for human rights abuses will need to be held to account.

Based on that, Mr President, we have a number of action points that we would like to call for today. I think the first call is on all Libyan parties to refrain from actions that undermine the ceasefire announcement, jeopardize the security of civilians, or set back Libya's efforts to advance the political process.

I think the second is to call on the House of Representatives to deliver progress on a constitutional basis for the elections. What we heard from the SRSB was frankly dismaying about the problem. Failure to sort this out will cause further stagnation and the only people who will lose are the Libyan people. We call on Libya's leaders to work together to address the suffering of the Libyan people. While election preparations are underway, they urgently need to agree economic reforms and to unify Libya's economic institutions to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth across the country.

We also encourage progress on the Prime Minister's request to enhance transparency in the Central Bank of Libya.

Finally, Mr President, a word about oil. We welcome the resolution of recent events in the oil crescent and we welcome that Libya's National Oil Corporation is continuing its vital work on behalf of all Libyans. The priority now is to repair infrastructure on contractual obligations and, having lifted the state of emergency in eastern Libya, to restore oil exports and production.

It's very important, I think, Mr President, the Council remains in very close touch with the Special Representative given the situation on the ground. We're very happy to do that. If Council members would find it helpful, we're also ready to circulate a draft press statement. Thank you.

Speech: Stability and Constructive Dialogue in Nicaragua

Thank you very much Madam President. It's the first time I take the floor under your Presidency, so congratulations to you and your team for assuming the Presidency for September. Thank you very much to the OAS representative for his informative briefing and also to Mr Maradiaga for your harrowing testimony.

I think the Kuwaiti Ambassador has set out very clearly the legal framework under the Charter for why we are having this debate today and we're grateful to the US delegation for putting it on the Council's agenda. I won't rehearse the legal framework since I think Ambassador Otaibi gave a very good account, but I what I will say is that it's right that the Council is made aware by the regional organisation concerned of its concerns and the concerns that this may start to have effects throughout the region. I don't think we ever want to get to a stage where the Council cant hear from a regional organization about its concerns about what is happening in the territory for which it is responsible.

But more than that, I think we also need to remember that the Nicaraguan government has expelled a UN agency; it has expelled the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. So I think that's a very important fact. Independent of Chapter 6 and the regional organisation's point, it's a very important fact. The Council needs to defend the UN entities, and therefore, even if there were no other reason, we would support discussing this issue today.

And lastly, I note that there has been a situation of refugees created – by definition, refugees cross international borders. It is therefore right that the Council should be able to debate the implications of that act, which may or may not constitute an unfriendly act, but also risks being destabilising to international peace and security. I am not making a judgment that it is destabilising, but as we heard from the Kuwaiti representative, the Council has the responsibility to investigate situations that may give rise to these implications – and I stress the word 'may.' And I think that is exactly what we're doing today.

My government has been watching events in Nicaragua very closely. We regret the loss of life that has occurred since the protest began in April and we call for an end to the violence and for the government of Nicaragua to comply with its international human rights obligations, and these include the rights of people to exercise their right to freedom of expression and to demonstrate peacefully and lawfully.

We have been deeply concerned by the excessive use of force by the authorities and pro-government paramilitaries against the people of Nicaragua. We call on the Nicaraguan government to demobilize paramilitary groups and to end the repression against its citizens. We have been alarmed

at the many reports we have seen that give rise to human rights concern. These include the use of live ammunition on protesters, and we call for them to be thoroughly investigated.

Maintaining press freedoms is always important, but it is particularly so during times of unrest. And we urge the Nicaraguan government to respect these freedoms and to allow the independent press to report freely, without suffering persecution and harassment, and we are very concerned at reports of violence against independent media outlets, journalists and their families.

I would also like to register our deep concern at reports of arbitrary detentions of dissenters and again we urge the Nicaraguan government to respect the right to a fair trial and prisoners' right to due process, a proper defense, and to respect the rights of their families.

Madam President, looking ahead, I think we are all aware that the challenges in Nicaragua can be overcome only through a meaningful and inclusive dialogue which addresses the legitimate concerns of the protesters. The United Kingdom was encouraged by the establishment of a national dialogue in May and we welcome the role the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua was able to play in convening that and mediating but we regret that that dialogue has had many breaks because of the violence, and the recent decision by the government to abandon the process is very regrettable. And once again, I would like to urge the Nicaraguan government to fulfil its commitment to engage sincerely in a dialogue, including by ensuring peaceful conditions for the dialogue to resume.

Turning to the OAS, Madam President, United Kingdom supports the OAS work. We also support the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and of course the United Nations in attempting to resolve the current crisis. These organizations have important roles to play in supporting dialogue and ensuring that human rights transgressions are fully investigated.

I referred earlier to the expulsion of the OHCHR. This followed the publication of their report on human rights violations and abuses in the context of protests in Nicaragua. I would like to urge the Nicaraguan government to reconsider that decision and to permit the OAS Working Group to enter Nicaragua, to carry out their important work and not to impede the work of the interdisciplinary group of independent experts established by the Inter-American Commission.

In conclusion, Madam President, a return to peace and stability in Nicaragua benefits not only to the people of Nicaragua, but also the whole region. We heard from the Russian representative a long catalogue of history. History is important, Madam President. It provides context but it is not the reason we are here today. We are here today for all the arguments that Ambassador Otaibi and I set out at the beginning. We want to see stability. We want the violence to end. We hope and urge the Nicaraguan government to engage meaningfully in an inclusive and constructive dialogue and to ensure that all human rights transgressions are fully investigated. Thank you very much Madam President.

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