

Press release: New powers to introduce tough sanctions against individuals, organisations and foreign governments

The government has today (Wednesday 2 August) [published plans](#) to enable post-Brexit Britain to continue to play a central role in global sanctions to combat the threats of terrorism, conflict and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Proposals include additional powers to cut off funding for terrorists by making it easier to freeze assets and block access to bank accounts.

The Sanctions Bill would ensure the UK has the necessary legal powers to implement sanctions after Brexit, as well as greater flexibility in choosing when and how to introduce new measures. The UK will also continue to play a central role in negotiating global sanctions as a member of the UN Security Council.

At the moment, the UK implements over 30 sanctions regimes, including those against Russia, North Korea, Iran, Daesh and Al Qaida.

The government's response to the 9-week public consultation of these new powers is to:

1. Create new powers to impose, implement and enforce sanctions regimes, drawing on the current EU model
2. Introduce an annual review of regimes to ensure that they remain appropriate
3. Ensure individuals and organisations can challenge any sanctions imposed on them
4. Enable the government to issue exemptions when needed, for example in delivering humanitarian aid in regions affected by sanctions; and
5. Make it easier to stop suspected terrorists from accessing their money

The UK currently negotiates and imposes non-UN sanctions against specific countries through EU laws. This Bill will repatriate powers on non-UN sanctions from Brussels, reflecting and building on the measures that the UK currently has under EU law.

Minister for Europe Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP said:

The new Sanctions Bill will ensure that when the UK leaves the European Union, we retain the ability to impose, update and lift sanctions regimes, both to comply with our international obligations and in pursuit of our foreign policy and national security objectives.

This will enable us to impose sanctions as appropriate either alone or with partners in the EU and around the world, to take targeted

action against countries, organisations and individuals who contravene international law, commit or finance terrorism or threaten international peace and security.

The government's proposed plans will also make it easier to freeze a suspected terrorist's bank accounts and stop them making money from their assets, such as selling their house or car.

At the moment, to freeze a person's assets, the government must reasonably believe that the person is, or has been, involved in terrorism, and that freezing their assets is necessary to protect the public.

The new proposals would make it easier to stop suspected terrorists in their tracks as the government would only need to have reasonable grounds to suspect the person or group is or has been involved in terrorism and that sanctions are an appropriate action.

This is important given the evolving nature of terrorism. Terrorists are now causing significant damage using very small amounts of funds and resources.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury Stephen Barclay said:

These new powers will help us keep the British public safer from terrorist attacks by keeping money out of the hands of those wishing to cause us harm.

Our counter terrorist financing proposals will make it easier for law enforcement and government to impose sanctions on those that present a threat to our national or international security.

These powers will help us continue to lead the global fight against Daesh and form part of the review of Britain's counter terrorism strategy announced in the Prime Minister's speech in June.