

# Press release: UK joins International Solar Alliance to help provide over 1 billion of the world's poorest people with clean, affordable energy

The UK is joining the Indian-led International Solar Alliance (ISA) to give over 1 billion of the world's poorest people access to cheap, clean, renewable energy, the International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has announced today (Monday 16 April) ahead of the Indian Prime Minister's state visit later this week.

Narendra Modi's flagship climate treaty has already brought together more than 60 countries who have pledged to increase solar power that will ensure homes remain lit, children can be educated in schools, health facilities can provide life-saving treatment, and businesses have access to vital mobile and internet services.

At an event held at the London Stock Exchange as part of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM), the UK cemented its membership to the ISA, which is aiming to raise \$1 trillion of private and public finance to provide affordable and sustainable energy for all by 2030.

The International Development Secretary has championed the UK's world-leading innovation and expertise – including from the City of London, the leading global centre for green investment finance – that will enable the ISA to deliver more effective programmes and help more of the world's most vulnerable people.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt said:

The signing of this treaty is a momentous occasion for the UK, and demonstrates our continued commitment to providing the very best of British expertise to the renewable energy sector. With the UK joining the International Solar Alliance, the lives of almost a billion of the world's poorest people, across the Commonwealth and beyond, will be changed for the better.

Partnering with like-minded countries and businesses who share the UK's commitment to delivering clean, affordable energy will help end poverty while also delivering benefits for the UK by opening up business opportunities for UK renewable energy and green finance companies.

Without India's leadership, the Alliance would not have come so far and so fast. By increasing access to solar energy, millions more babies will now be delivered safely, millions of farmers will be

able to grow more crops and better support their families, and millions more children can be better educated.

The UK will support the ISA to develop solar water pumping projects, where farmers can use cheaper solar power – rather than diesel pumps – to water their crops. This will build on the success of similar initiatives in Uganda and Bangladesh where farmers are already growing higher value vegetable crops and increasing their incomes.

UK expertise will also help increase the number of ‘mini grids’ supplying power to remote areas that cannot be reached by the main electricity grid. These energy sources are a life-line for rural communities, helping to power business and homes, making sure the poorest people no matter where they live can access clean, reliable and affordable energy quickly to lift themselves out of poverty.

This new collaboration means the ISA will be able to make solar power cheaper by helping countries join forces to procure solar energy systems. Currently twelve ISA countries, including Commonwealth countries Bangladesh and Malawi want to purchase over 720,000 solar pumps through ISA. The joint purchase will see a significant reduction in solar pump costs for each of the participating countries and up to five million people in developing countries will benefit from this collective purchase.

### **Notes to Editors:**

Traditional financial aid to India ended in 2015. The UK now provides the country with world-leading expertise and private investment which boost prosperity, create jobs and open up markets, while generating a return for the UK at the same time. This is firmly in our interests.

The UK is providing technical expertise and private sector investments to support India’s development in areas where the UK has globally recognised expertise and commercial capability.

The International Solar Alliance aims to raise \$1,000 billion to deliver clean and affordable energy to almost a billion people who currently lack access.

The UK will be the 62nd country to join the ISA. Others included Australia, Bangladesh, Tuvalu, Benin, United Arab Emirates Brazil, Vanuatu, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and France.

The UK will provide the best of British expertise and advice to help the effective delivery of the Indian-led initiative. The UK will only provide expertise to the ISA, there will be no monetary contributions.

UK expertise will enable UK, NGO’s, researchers and businesses to collaborate with ISA partners to generate innovation and investments that will help meet the ISA’s target to provide affordable sustainable energy for all by 2030.

The UK is supporting the ISA through existing initiatives and partnerships

that will open up new solar markets for UK companies. This will include sharing UK experiences that supported the UK solar market to become viable and as a result no longer need taxpayers' support.

A number of countries DFID works in have already signed up to join the ISA and will benefit from the additional expertise that the UK is providing. Countries include: DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Sierra-Leone, Uganda, Yemen, Rwanda, Nigeria, Somalia and Tanzania.