

News story: Human Rights Council 39: Sri Lanka Core Group Statement

This statement is delivered on behalf of Germany, Macedonia, Montenegro and the UK as members of the Sri Lanka core group.

We welcome further recent steps Sri Lanka has taken to implement commitments made to the Council in 2015 and 2017. We welcome the Government's continued engagement with the UN system and actions to implement its National Reconciliation Action Plan and Peacebuilding Priority Plan. We applaud the Office on Missing Persons' commencement of work and encourage everyone able to advance or contribute to its work to do so. We hope the Government will establish an Office for Reparations quickly. We also welcome the return of further private land in the north, and commitments to return more military-occupied land to civilian ownership.

Nonetheless, the pace of progress on important areas remains much slower than many hoped for. As time passes, lack of progress in delivering key steps risks undermining reconciliation efforts.

In co-sponsoring resolution 30/1, Sri Lanka recognised that national accountability mechanisms are essential to dealing with the past, and to restoring confidence among its communities. These have yet to be established. The Prevention of Terrorism Act has not been replaced with a law that accords with international standards. And, though processes to consider reform to important provisions of the Constitution, including devolution of political authority, has been ongoing since 2016, a way forward has not been found. We are concerned by recent reports of harassment of and attacks on human rights defenders.

Our view remains that, with determined leadership and a clear time-bound action plan, this Government can make more progress towards delivering its Council commitments, and that doing so will better position Sri Lanka and its people to enjoy a more enduring reconciliation and prosperity. We urge Sri Lanka to prioritise and drive forward implementation of resolutions 30/1 and 34/1, before the Council next considers Sri Lanka in March.

News story: Dounreay site demonstration exercise 12 September 2018

The Dounreay site alert will be sounded during the course of the exercise.

This notice is to inform the public not to take any action when the alarm sounds.

Any queries in relation to this notice should be made to Leslie Mackay 01847 802535.

Press release: Military charity successfully reconstructed as a result of charity regulator's inquiry

A charity originally set up to establish memorials to D-Day veterans, and which now supports former members of the armed forces, has been successfully reconstructed as a result of a Charity Commission inquiry that facilitated the appointment of new trustees.

The Commission's existing engagement with [The Veterans Charity](#) escalated to a formal inquiry in April 2015, after three individuals connected to the charity, including the chief executive, were arrested by British Transport Police over concerns about the charity's fundraising practices. The publication of the report was delayed as the Commission awaited the outcome of the trial of the charity's chief executive for charges of theft and fraud by abuse of position; that trial ended when the judge ordered the jury to find him not guilty due to a lack of evidence.

The Commission used its powers on opening the inquiry to safeguard the charity's assets by freezing the bank accounts; while that freezing order was in place, the regulator monitored and authorised all of the charity's expenditure, ensuring that each transaction was necessary and a proper application of the charity's funds. It also exercised other statutory powers to ensure that funds collected from the public in particular through an annual event known as The Forces March were adequately protected while reconstruction took place.

During the early stages of the inquiry, the Commission identified a number of shortcomings in the charity's administration, including that the charity's finances were under the sole control of the chief executive, with limited oversight by the trustees. For a significant period of time the chief executive had sole control of the charity's bank accounts, including its cheque book, debit card and online banking facility.

The inquiry found that nearly £38,000 of the charity's expenditure had been withdrawn as cash during the period between January 2010 and May 2015, equating to over £500 each month. The inquiry was informed by the charity that the invoices for expenditure before 2013 were lost as a result of an office move. The inquiry was advised that cash withdrawals were used to repay

subsistence claims for expenditure on charity business including accommodation, fuel, event costs such as the purchase of stocks, and support for beneficiaries. However there was very little supporting documentary evidence to confirm how these charitable funds had been applied.

In a report published today, the regulator concludes that the trustees of the charity at the time the inquiry opened were responsible for mismanagement in the administration of the charity, after failing to properly oversee the charity's chief executive or implement effective financial controls or maintain adequate financial records.

Notwithstanding these concerns, the inquiry was satisfied as a result of its investigative work that the charity was undertaking work to provide urgent short term support for veterans in need. It therefore sought volunteers from the charity sector to assist in the charity's reconstruction. Three people stepped forward to help – two of whom remain as trustees today.

The Commission revoked its protective measures in early 2016 following the strengthening of the charity's governance and financial controls. The Commission is satisfied that its original regulatory concerns have been addressed following a further inspection of records and meeting with the trustees.

Harvey Grenville, Head of Investigations and Enforcement at the Charity Commission, says:

This charity has undertaken valuable work to support veterans in urgent short term need, and our report acknowledges the new trustees' contribution to the reconstruction of this charity. This is a collaborative model with sector professionals which we would like to see further developed to assist the reconstruction of certain charities which are in difficulty.

The charity's work prior to this reconstruction was undermined by poor management on the part of the charity's trustees at the time. This was a charity without adequate systems and controls in place, and limited oversight of the chief executive by the trustees. This is unacceptable, and we are critical of the trustees at that time for their failings.

When the public give to charity, they have a right to expect that their donations will be carefully managed, and be applied solely in furtherance of the charity's aims. Trustees may hand day-to-day operations to staff – but they must retain oversight, and ultimately, they are always responsible for everything that happens in their charity.

I am grateful, especially to the new trustees, for their hard work in turning the charity around, and ensuring its processes and

systems are strengthened so that the charity's work can continue.

The investigation concludes with the publication of this report. The [full report](#) is available on gov.uk.

Ends

Press office

Email

pressenquiries@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk

Press enquiries – office hours
0300 065 2123

Press enquiries – out of hours
07785 748787

[News story: CEN updates affecting chemical measurements July 2018](#)

Fertilizers

[Regulation \(EC\) No 2003/2003](#) concerns fertilizers placed on the EU market and designated as an 'EC fertilizer'. The Regulation states that the content of one or more of the micro-nutrients boron, cobalt, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, or zinc present in specified types of fertilizers shall be declared where certain conditions are fulfilled where sampling and analysis methods shall, wherever possible, use European Standards. Further amendments to the Regulation have been made and a consolidated version of the Regulation up to 2016 can be found [here](#).

[EN 17041:2018](#)

Fertilizers – Determination of boron in concentrations ≤ 10 % using spectrometry with azomethine-H

EN 17041:2018 describes a spectrophotometric method for the determination of total and water extractable boron in mineral fertilizers by measuring the yellow coloured complex formed in solution by the reaction of boron with azomethine-H {4-hydroxy-5-[(6-oxocyclohexa-2,4-dien-1-ylidene)methylamino]naphthalene-2,7-disulfonic acid}. The method is suitable for concentrations of boron in mineral fertilizers equal to or less than 10%.

This spectrophotometric method requires more preparation, including the removal of organic matter from the extract which interferes with the colour, compared to other equivalent methods using more complex instruments such as inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES) but is considered as reliable and relatively inexpensive. EN 17041 is applicable to water and aqua regia fertilizer extracts obtained using EN 16962 and/or EN 16964 but it is not suitable where the iron concentration is twenty times greater than the boron concentration.

Although the method is only suitable for fertilizer extracts having a boron concentration of 10% or less, the method can be adapted for higher boron concentrations through quantitative dilutions of the extract to be within the specified 10% concentration range.

[EN 17042:2018](#) Fertilizers – Determination of boron in concentrations > 10 % using acidimetric titration

EN 17042:2018 describes a method for the determination of boron in mineral fertilizers by acidimetric titration using sodium hydroxide to a specified pH end-point. The method is suitable for concentrations of boron in the mineral fertilizer in excess of 10%.

Soluble boron extracted from the fertilizer forms boric acid (a weak acid) in solution and can be titrated against a standardised molar solution of sodium hydroxide but only after adding D-mannitol to form a mannitoboric complex which enables titration to an end point of pH 6.3 corresponding to a known mass of boron.

EN 17042 is applicable to water and aqua regia fertiliser extracts obtained using EN 16962 and/or EN 16964.

[EN 17043:2018](#) Fertilizers – Determination of molybdenum in concentrations ≤ 10 % using spectrometry of a complex with ammonium thiocyanate

EN 17043 describes a spectrophotometric method for the determination of total and water extractable molybdenum in mineral fertilizers by measuring the yellow/orange coloured molybdenum (V) thiocyanate complex $[\text{MoO}(\text{SCN})_5]$ formed by the reaction of molybdenum and ammonium thiocyanate in acid solution. The method is suitable for concentrations of molybdenum in mineral fertilizers equal to or less than 10%.

This spectrophotometric method requires more preparation, including the removal of organic matter from the extract which interferes with the coloured complex, compared to other equivalent methods using more complex instruments such as inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES) but is considered as reliable and relatively inexpensive. EN 17043 is applicable to water and aqua regia fertilizer extracts obtained using EN 16962 and/or EN 16964.

Further information on food and feed legislation can be found on the Government Chemist website:

[**News story: Human Rights Council 39: Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order and SR on Contemporary forms of Slavery**](#)

The United Kingdom welcomes the important contributions made by the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

We value her efforts to examine the drivers of all contemporary forms of slavery and give a platform to victims and their families. Developing a shared understanding of this often hidden crime is crucial if we are to eradicate it by 2030.

We welcome the Special Rapporteur's report exploring the impact of slavery and servitude on marginalized migrant women workers in the global domestic economy. Their lack of visibility makes them particularly vulnerable. We must do more to overcome this challenge and strengthen their access to justice and support.

Through advocacy and programmes, the UK is supporting the most vulnerable people in the countries where slavery is most prevalent, focusing on at risk groups like women and girls, children and people on the move. We are working to tackle the root causes of slavery and support victims in a manner that is gender-sensitive. For example, we are funding the second phase of the Work in Freedom programme to help women facing modern slavery and exploitation in domestic households and the garment industry in South Asia and the Middle East. We are also funding a number of programmes: for example, a programme in Ethiopia to support child victims, in particular girls, who have been involved in, or are at risk of becoming involved in, domestic work.

Mdme Special Rapporteur,

Your report provides a comprehensive list of recommended actions for Member States. How should Member States prioritise your recommendations?