

How much more of Russia's nonsense do we have to endure: UK Statement at the Security Council

Thank you President, and thank you Mr Ebo for your very clear briefing. I'd like to start by reaffirming the United Kingdom's deep commitment to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

On 24 February, Russia invaded Ukraine, an act of aggression in clear violation of international law, which the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to condemn.

Since then, the Russian Federation has repeatedly spread disinformation, including wild claims involving dirty bombs, chemical weapons, and offensive biological research.

How much more of this nonsense do we have to endure?

As we've heard, Russia's allegations were given a full hearing last month, according to the processes set out under Article 5 of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

89 States Parties attended that meeting, and listened as Russia delivered nothing but misrepresentations of assorted public documents and copy-and-pasted images from Wikipedia.

The response from the other States Parties was clear and overwhelming:

- that Russia must end its aggression and disinformation campaign against Ukraine; and
- that Russia must stop demonising legitimate peaceful scientific and technical cooperation, which all BTWC States Parties have a right to participate in under Article 10 of the Convention, and which is rightly valued by many States Parties.

That process has now concluded. Russia's claims have been heard, considered, and rejected. The bar has not been met for further investigation and proposals for further action would be a waste of this Council's time. This Council is a serious body and risks being brought into disrepute by Russia's actions.

There are plenty of issues that demand our attention but Russia is clogging up the agenda with conspiracy theories.

Instead of attempting to smear Ukraine, Russia should focus on its own obligations, including the UN Charter, and end this war.

Thank you President.

PM call with Prime Minister of Canada: 27 October 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau this evening.



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau this evening, committing to continue the strong partnership between our two countries.

The leaders welcomed the close alignment between the UK and Canada's values and priorities, noting the important role of free market democracies in promoting global economic growth and stability.

They discussed Russia's invasion of Ukraine and agreed to continue working together to provide unequivocal support for Ukraine and ensure Vladimir Putin's actions do not go unpunished or undeterred.

The Prime Minister also welcomed Canada's support for the UK's accession to the CPTPP Pacific trade bloc, and the leaders committed to deepen collaboration in trade and energy security.

They looked forward to working closely together through the G7 and bilaterally, and to meeting at the G20 in Indonesia next month.

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Environment Agency issues drought permits to Yorkshire Water

Yorkshire Water submitted drought permit applications for the North West Group of Reservoirs across Wharfedale, Bingley, Shipley, Craven, Yeadon, Baildon and the Worth Valley.

The water company's current licences require them to release a certain amount of water from the reservoirs to maintain the health of the river. The permits allow them to reduce the amount released to conserve water in the reservoirs and secure water supplies, while still maintaining necessary environmental protection for the river.

The 12 permits were issued by the Environment Agency on Monday 24 October and will last until 31 March 2023.

Earlier this month the applications were subject to a Planning Inspectorate public hearing after an objection from a member of the public. The Environment Agency considered the Inspector's report when making its decisions.

Serious deficiency in water supplies

Victoria Slingsby, Environment Agency Yorkshire Drought Manager, said:

Despite recent rainfall in Yorkshire, this has not been enough to refill rivers and reservoirs and we are still facing a serious deficiency of water supplies.

We only issue a permit if we are content that there are clear plans in place to mitigate any impact on the environment, along with strong evidence from Yorkshire Water of their ongoing commitment to reduce leaks and improve water efficiency.

We will continue to work closely with Yorkshire Water as it develops the long-term solutions to protect water resources while drought conditions continue across Yorkshire.

Leeshaw reservoir

Yorkshire moved to drought status in August

If a permit is used, Yorkshire Water will need to inform the Environment Agency before doing so. They will also need to carry out monitoring and mitigation to assess and manage potential environmental impacts.

To reduce unnecessary use of water and protect customer supplies and the environment, Yorkshire Water has already announced a temporary-use ban (TUB), prohibiting use of hosepipes by its customers.

Yorkshire officially moved to drought status on 15 August following six months of below average rainfall combined with high temperatures, which affected most of the country.

Earlier this month the National Drought Group forecast that average rainfall levels over winter will still not be sufficient to avoid impending drought or drought conditions into next year. Some water companies suggested conditions will remain beyond spring in some areas, including Yorkshire, if rainfall remains below average.

Reservoir levels across Yorkshire are 25% lower than they were at this time last year. The exceptional shortage of rainfall this year, and the possibility of a shortage continuing over the winter, led to Yorkshire Water applying for these permits to help the North West group of reservoirs to refill.

Further information about drought in Yorkshire can be found [online](#)

The 12 reservoirs are:

- Carr Bottom Reservoir (Wharfedale)
- Doe Park Reservoir (Bingley)
- Eldwick Reservoir (Shipley)
- Embsay Reservoir (Craven)
- Grimwith Reservoir (Craven)
- Hewenden Reservoir (Bingley)
- Leeming Reservoir (Worth Valley)
- Leeshaw Reservoir (Worth Valley)
- Reva Reservoir (Yeadon)
- Silsden Reservoir (Craven)
- Weecher Reservoir (Baildon)
- Springhead Weir (Worth Valley)

Time to seize this momentum and deliver positive change for the people of Abyei

Thank you President and thank you to the Assistant Secretary-General and the Special Envoy for their very helpful briefings. I would also like to welcome the representatives of Sudan and South Sudan to this meeting. We would like to make three brief points today.

First, the United Kingdom commends UNISFA's tireless efforts to deliver its mandate under such challenging circumstances and we thank the troop-contributing countries. We fully support the extension of the Mission's mandate for twelve months.

We join our fellow Council members in reiterating the call on the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to remove the longstanding obstacles that limit the full implementation of UNISFA's mandate.

In particular, we are concerned by the restrictions on the Mission's freedom of movement and by attacks on UNISFA personnel during the reporting period.

We urge the Government of South Sudan to ensure the re-operationalisation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism Headquarters in Gok Machar.

Second, we must continue to watch carefully the situation on the ground in Abyei. Civilians continue to suffer due to the absence of basic services and limited rule of law.

We are concerned about the ongoing intercommunal violence across Abyei, including the worrying increase in tensions between Dinka communities. Recent flooding has compounded the worsening humanitarian situation too. On top of insecurity and a lack of infrastructure, this is putting huge pressure on the humanitarian response. In these circumstances, ensuring unrestricted access is vital.

The United Kingdom urges all parties fully to respect International Humanitarian Law and protect and enable humanitarian staff, assets and operations to deliver aid to those in need in all parts of Abyei, without hindrance.

Third, we remain concerned by the lack of progress on a political solution for Abyei. We therefore welcome the increased focus on this from Sudan and from South Sudan. We call on both Governments to seize this momentum and deliver measurable positive change for the people of Abyei.

As a next step, we urge both countries to organise a further meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee as a sign of their recommitment to reaching an agreement.

Lastly, we welcome the African Union's recent Communiqué regarding Abyei, and we encourage the AU to intensify their mediation efforts to help reach an agreement on its final status.

Thank you.

PM call with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz: 27 October 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to the German Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, this afternoon.



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke to the German Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, this afternoon.

The pair reflected on their strong relationship as finance ministers and said they hoped to build on that friendship as leaders.

Discussing Russia's abhorrent attacks in Ukraine, the Prime Minister and the Chancellor agreed on the need to continue supporting Ukraine and maintaining pressure on Putin through robust sanctions.

The leaders also discussed their desire to build on the close collaboration between the UK and European Union on shared challenges, including Russia and global energy security.

Both said they looked forward to seeing each other in Indonesia next month.

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