

# The normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia remains vital

Thank you Mr President. We thank the Special Representative for her briefing. And we welcome the representatives of Kosovo and Serbia to the Security Council.

The United Kingdom welcomes the continued progress made by the Government of Kosovo on a number of important issues, this includes:

Its continued commitment to reform, notably important work on the rule of law, and tackling organised crime and corruption.

It includes Kosovo's efforts to improve support to victims of Sexual and Gender based violence, and the integration of the Istanbul Convention into its Constitution.

And it includes its work on transitional justice, not least for survivors of conflict related sexual violence, as well as the work of the Government Commission for Missing Persons.

Recent reports from both the EU and the OSCE also show good progress on countering terrorism, public administration reform, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and organised crime, and the protection of human and fundamental rights.

We welcome the government's increased engagement with minority communities. Dialogue between communities is vital for the stability of Kosovo as a multi-ethnic state, and we encourage the Kosovan government to continue such engagement.

In particular we encourage greater outreach to Kosovo Serb political leaders and representatives to resolve outstanding issues.

President, the normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia remains vital. We reiterate our full support for the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo.

Now is the moment for both parties to engage in the Dialogue in good faith, honour their Dialogue commitments, and avoid actions or rhetoric that could reduce prospects for reaching a comprehensive and sustainable normalisation agreement, benefiting the people of both countries.

The progress referred to in the Secretary-General's report, for example on the adoption of an energy agreement roadmap, is encouraging. But we were concerned to witness the rise in tensions on 31 July over the implementation of government decisions on car number plates and ID cards. Such decisions should not be used as an excuse for blockades or violence.

We therefore welcome the resolution of the disagreement over ID cards,

facilitated through the determined efforts of the EU Special Representative and international partners. This is a clear example of what can be achieved when both parties approach the process with pragmatism.

Finally, President, UNMIK has played a vital role in the incredible progress Kosovo has made since resolution 1244 was adopted in 1999. Conditions on the ground are of course unrecognisable from 1999, and it would be the right time now to undertake a thorough review of UNMIK's shape and role, and of the Council's process that we have around it.

In the meantime the UK would like to reiterate its gratitude to the Special Representative and the mission for all of their work, and for the professional implementation of their mandate.

Thank you.

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## [Signing of MoU with the Sustainable Finances Roundtable](#)

World news story

The British Embassy in Asuncion and the Sustainable Finances Roundtable (MSF) signed an agreement that backs sustainable development.



Photo courtesy of the MSF: President Omar Fernandez and Ambassador Ramin Navai sign the MoU

On occasion of its ten-year anniversary, the Sustainable Finances Roundtable (MFS for its acronym in Spanish) of Paraguay signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British Embassy in Asunción, with the aim of strengthening climate action and international cooperation. The event took place on 5 October at the Talleyrand Jade Park with the attendance of senior executives of the national private banking sector.

From this MoU, both parties agreed to work together to promote sustainable finance as a key instrument to catalyse sustainable, low-carbon and resilient development to the adverse effects of climate change. At the same time, the cooperation framework will enable joint efforts to exchange experiences, strengthen capacities and build a more inclusive financial system.

Senior representatives from more than ten banks had the opportunity to exchange perspectives with representatives of IDB Invest, part of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group, and the Netherlands Development Bank (FMO).

British Ambassador Ramin Navai congratulated the MFS team for ten years of work promoting sustainable finance. At the same time, he took the opportunity to stress that this decade is decisive in establishing the necessary structures for a clean, prosperous and healthy future for all. He added:

Laying the foundations for a sustainable future depends not only on governments, but also on all sectors, including the financial sector.

At the international level, the mobilisation of the financial sector around global climate objectives has become increasingly important. For example, in the context of the UK presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), the Glasgow Finance Alliance for Zero Net Emissions (GFANZ) launched.

Financial partnerships such as the MoU between the British Embassy in Asuncion and the MSF enable institutions to pool and collaborate with each other to mobilise resources to stop the irreparable damage of climate change.

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## [Science Minister in Italy for first meeting with European Space Agency](#)

This week (Monday 17 October), recently appointed Minister for Science and Investment Security Nusrat Ghani arrived at the European Space Agency (ESA)'s Centre for Earth Observation to meet with ESA's Director General Josef Aschbacher, and Austrian Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility and Technology, Leonore Gewessler.

Minister Ghani was joined by UK Space Agency CEO Paul Bate for the visit, the Minister's first trip outside the UK since being appointed in her ministerial position within the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

The meeting with Dr. Aschbacher came ahead of this year's ESA Council of Ministers (CMIN22), set to take place in November, at which member states look to invest in the next evolution of ESA missions and programmes, and at which the UK contribution to ESA will be confirmed.

November's Ministerial council will present an exciting opportunity to help set the future direction of ESA, and to achieve an outcome for the UK that delivers on our [National Space Strategy](#) (NSS) objectives while driving growth and supporting safety and sustainability on Earth.

Minister for Science and Investment Security Nusrat Ghani said:

I am proud to be representing the UK space sector as we discuss our ambitions ahead of the ESA Council of Ministers next month. There are a series of important programmes on the table, and I want to harness opportunities in space to grow the UK economy, create jobs and inspire young people into STEM careers.

It was important to me that my first international trip was with ESA and I look forward to the Council of Ministers meeting in November and campaigning for 2025 UK Presidency.

We're also making new funding available now to strengthen the UK's position as a world leader in the satellite communications market, and I look forward to seeing the results of the competition.

Having committed £374 million per year over five years to ESA in 2019, the UK's investment and collaboration with the agency is of significant value to the economy and domestic sector, illustrated by new [UK Space Agency report](#) findings published this week, which find that for every £1 invested, ESA will generate an overall return of £11.80 for the UK economy.

The visit to Italy also coincided with Minister Ghani's unveiling of a [new £15 million fund](#) for UK businesses to revolutionise satellite communications technology. The competition will prioritise customer needs, support sustainable growth and catalyse further investment into the UK space sector, which already employs 47,000 people.

The trip was indicative of the UK's strong commitment to the space and R&D sector both at home and across Europe. The UK's European and global partnerships form an essential part of this government's ambitions in the field as we begin to explore the possibility of bidding for the ESA presidency for 2025, continue to advocate for our association to the Horizon Europe research programme, and look ahead to a busy pipeline of bilateral engagements across R&D.

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## Mali's actions and statements call into question its commitment to partnership with the UN

Thank you, President, and thank you, SRSW Wane, for your insights, your leadership of MINUSMA and the hard work of your team in the toughest of circumstances. I join others in expressing our deepest condolences following the deaths of the four Chadian peacekeepers in Kidal. I also welcome the participation of Foreign Minister Diop in our meeting and express condolences for the deaths of civilians and military losses on the Malian side.

Mr. President, when the Council met to discuss Mali in June, we encouraged the transitional authorities to continue engaging with ECOWAS on an election timetable. Since then, agreement has been reached, sanctions lifted and some positive steps made toward elections. The peace agreement monitoring committee has also met for the first time in over a year. As these endeavours move forward, we hope the authorities will ensure inclusive processes, particularly of women and young people, while promoting dialogue.

We understand the Malian authorities are dealing with multiple challenges. AQ and IS-affiliated groups continue to expand their territory, preying on communities and attacking military bases. The 40% increase in cases of conflict-related sexual violence reported by the Secretary-General is a shocking illustration of just how urgent it is to improve human rights protection.

But the terror imposed by these groups must not be countered with a military response that itself fails to protect civilians and their human rights. In August, the UN Independent Expert on human rights in Mali reported violations committed by Malian forces alongside – and I quote – ‘foreign military personnel described as Russian military officials’. The malign presence of the Wagner Group can no longer be ignored or denied.

All perpetrators of human rights abuses and violations must be held accountable. Without accountability and justice, trust cannot be rebuilt and grievances will endure. MINUSMA must be granted unrestricted access to investigate human rights allegations independently. Mali's statement in June that the authorities would not guarantee the mission's freedom to achieve this was deeply concerning and it is part of a pattern of actions and statements that call into question Mali's commitment to full partnership with MINUSMA. We urge the authorities to work constructively with the mission, lifting restrictions and facilitating the vital work of peacekeepers.

The United Kingdom remains a strong supporter of MINUSMA and its mission. The UN's forthcoming review of MINUSMA will need to answer some fundamental questions. These include whether and how the mission can maintain a viable presence in Mali. The review should present credible options reflecting realities on the ground. We look forward to engaging with colleagues on this

in the coming weeks.

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## Trade Secretary speech at Netherlands trade mission in London

Good afternoon everyone.

Thank you Ambassador and thank you Liesje for that excellent speech and also an extra special thank you to the Dutch government for organising this event. I think it's going to be very successful. It's good to see you all here.

What I'd start off by saying is welcome to Tobacco Dock. This is a symbol of our trading past. It's a modern building now, but I think if you can imagine 200 years ago what it would have looked like, full of barrels shipped from all over the world – some no doubt from the Netherlands.

Today it's great to see it filled not with barrels but with people, and more importantly with businesses who are helping to shape our shared economic future. The future of the UK and the Netherlands are aligned. Our success relies on each other's success.

It's wonderful to see you all here because it's the symbolic nature of the steady stream of Dutch firms that are making the UK their home.

In the last year Heineken and the chemicals company DSM, have injected tens of millions of pounds into their UK operations, creating hundreds of jobs...

And smaller Dutch firms, in some of the sectors represented here today, like the e-bike manufacturers Van Moof and Ebke, are investing on this side of the North Sea too.

The UK and the Netherlands exchanged almost £88 billion of goods and services in the year ending March – that makes the Netherlands our fourth largest trading partner.

And by our most recent reckoning, Dutch business make up over 10pc of this country's foreign direct inward investment.

But, as we're finding today, we can achieve more.

I want you to know that we want companies, like yours, pioneers in new forms of transport, AI and data analytics, to flourish in our country.

Why? First, because you will help drive the growth that will support our long-term economic security for both countries.

Second, because your ideas and expertise will maintain the UK's place as a

technological trail blazer, helping to future proof us against a changing world.

But I must emphasise, it is not a one-way street because we have something to offer as well.

In return we can offer you one of the best places in the world for an innovative business to call home.

We have four of the world's top universities.

We have a growing, energetic talent pool...

We've committed through our National Infrastructure Strategy to invest in roads, railways and internet connections – making it easier for businesses both in the UK and the Netherlands to set up and thrive.

And we've created a pro ambition, pro business regulatory environment.

We're also looking at how we can unlock opportunities in some of your sectors today:

For example, last year we launched our AI Strategy, which spells out how we will support the sector and harness its advances.

I'm sure my international trade team at the back of the room will be delighted to talk more about this.

They're a great team. Over the last three years, they've helped Dutch businesses to invest in scores of projects in this country – creating over 8,000 jobs.

Of course, today is also a reminder of the strength of the UK-Dutch relationship.

Britain's prosperity didn't come about by accident.

It was built through a commitment to democracy, free markets and strong and mutually-beneficial partnerships, like the one we share with the Netherlands.

We are both monarchies, long-standing allies, and our friendship has lasted from the era of Erasmus to the age of AI.

For many years now, British expats have been making each other's country home.

Our universities welcome students from either side of the North Sea and our academic collaborations, like the one between the Universities of York and Maastricht, are advancing knowledge in critical areas like medical technology and data science.

The UK and the Netherlands work together to make the world a better place.

For over six decades, our Royal Navy has prepared large numbers of Royal

Dutch Navy warships so they're ready for operations around the world.

Today we're together standing up for freedom by imposing economic sanctions on Russia following its invasion of Ukraine...and our businesses are collaborating on major clean energy projects that will help us keep the lights on.

We don't have many differences. But like any good friends, when we come across issues, we work through them.

So, I know that there is great potential for our relationship to hit new heights.

As two old friends with a love of enterprise, innovation and independence...we have a real opportunity to create an even deeper and more productive trading partnership, that will serve us both well in future.

I've just been discussing our shared priorities with Liesje in our meeting earlier.

And I'm looking forward to continuing the conversation about how we can make it even easier for us to cooperate.

I'll end by saying that this trade mission is the latest in a long list of pioneering and productive collaborations between our nations...

In the sixteenth century, the Dutch philosopher Erasmus, discussed with the English scholar Sir Thomas More, ideas that would shape our societies.

In the 19th century, Vincent van Gogh was inspired by his stay in London to paint and influenced countless artists around the world.

And your businesses, with their amazing advances, show how together we can push forward the boundaries of progress in the 21st.

Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth once said that our nations are: Innovators, traders and internationalists.

That's been true for five centuries. And from everything I've seen here today, I know it is more the case now than ever before.

So, I'll wish you all a fantastic trade mission. And every success for the future. Thank you.