

We must all unequivocally reject Russian attempts to illegally annex Ukrainian territory: UK at the UN Security Council

Mr. President,

Russia's holding of sham referenda in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions of Ukraine is an egregious violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and of the principles of the UN Charter.

As the UN told us today, this process is both illegal and illegitimate.

It is a shameless propaganda effort aimed at justifying Russia's illegal presence on sovereign Ukrainian territory.

We have seen Russia's referendum playbook before in Crimea. We see it playing out again now: disinformation, intimidation and fabrication.

As my Foreign Secretary told the Council last week, we know that President Putin is planning to rig the outcome.

These are regions that voted overwhelmingly to join an independent Ukraine in 1991 and to back President Zelenskyy in 2019.

When given a free vote, their choice has been clear: to be part of a free, independent, democratic Ukraine.

Since invading, Russia's control in these regions has been through violence, torture, filtration and forced deportation.

We've all seen images of soldiers with automatic rifles accompanying the ballots as they move from door to door, forcing Ukrainians to take part.

Any referenda held under these conditions, at the barrel of a gun, can never be remotely close to free or fair.

And the very idea that a referendum on a fundamental question could be held at three days' notice in the middle of a war zone is frankly farcical.

We must all unequivocally reject these illegitimate actions and Russian attempts to illegally annex Ukrainian territory. And support the draft resolution the US and Albania have brought forward today.

Colleagues, this is a critical moment. There is no middle ground. No member of the United Nations should turn a blind eye to Russia tearing up the principles of the UN Charter.

If we allow Russia to believe it can change sovereign borders by force, then the entire system on which we base our shared safety and security is under threat.

These Potemkin referenda, as well as Putin's decision to mobilise Russian men to fight in his illegal war, are admissions that his invasion is failing.

Instead of sending thousands more of his own citizens to their death and inflicting further destruction on Ukraine, he should end this senseless war today.

Thank you.

[Environment Agency crushes tipper truck in waste crime probe](#)

Investigators believe the Ford tipper truck belonged to a group operating at various sites in the capital. Crime officers removed the vehicle from an address at Chesham in Buckinghamshire during a wider probe into organised waste crime.

The 18-year white van had been seen reportedly dumping waste on open land, in empty warehouses and other sites in Croydon, Merton, Mitcham and Southwark in the past year. Material left at the sites included construction waste, tyres and rubbish from house clearances.

Officers continue to investigate the vehicle's owners, who failed to come forward to claim it before it was destroyed.

Matt Higginson, an Environment Manager for the Environment Agency in the South East, said:

Where individuals threaten to undermine legitimate businesses and illegally dump waste, we have no hesitation in using all powers open to us.

Seizing vehicles involved in waste crime, based upon vital intelligence from the public, is an important weapon in our armoury to disrupt waste criminals and can make a real difference to local communities blighted by illegal dumping of waste.

To avoid unwittingly supporting waste criminals, and facing the possibility of an unlimited fine, we ask the public and businesses to always ask for proof of a waste carrier's registration and waste transfer note – and take photos of them – before having any waste

cleared.

Crushing suspected offenders' vehicles is one of the tactics of Operation Angola, which investigates large-scale illegal dumping of commercial waste.

Whether a resident or a business, everyone should take responsibility for their own waste. Don't give rubbish to someone who can't prove they are a legitimate waste carrier – they may just dump it to avoid paying waste-disposal costs.

Anyone using a company or individual to take away their waste should always obtain a waste transfer note as proof. If in any doubt, call the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111, or use the online form at www.crimestoppers-uk.org.

The white 2004 Ford tipper truck was seized using powers under section 34B of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The decision to crush the vehicle was taken as there was no value in selling the vehicle.

[United Kingdom promotes livelihoods and environmental protection in the Verapaces](#)

World news story

UK project will allow families in Senahú, Alta Verapaz, to improve their coffee and cardamom production while protecting the environment.



The British Ambassador, Nick Whittingham, attended the launch of the project "Indigenous bio cultural landscapes for livelihoods and connectivity in Verapaces". It will be financed by the [Darwin Initiative](#) and the Fund of the

Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) of the British Government.

The initiative will support the productive livelihoods of 10 Q'eqch'í and Poqomch'íes indigenous cooperatives, benefiting a total of 4,500 families in the municipality of Senahú Alta Verapaz that are associated with the Federation of Cooperatives of Las Verapaces, Limited Liability -FEDECOVERA, RL. - .

The project is carried out in the Sierra Yalijux of Alta Verapaz, an area of high biodiversity whose protection depends on private nature reserves and remnants of forest that are still within the territories of cooperatives and indigenous communities. The project goals are:

- Rescue and recognize the value of biodiversity through stories and ceremonies associated with good practices on the use and management of natural resources and indigenous knowledge about nature.
- Improve the income of 4,500 families through sustainable activities in an equitable manner by ethnic group, generation and gender.
- Restore forest cover to create biological corridors between fragmented and disturbed forests.
- Reduce the carbon footprint in the production of coffee and cardamom by reducing the use of firewood, ecological processing and production in agroforestry systems.
- Support women, youth and indigenous communities in alternative livelihoods compatible with nature.

The project has a duration of three years starting September 2022, with financing of £560,000 (approximately 5 million quetzals) from the British government, and a counterpart contribution of £158,000, which makes a total of Q6,462,000 quetzals. It will be implemented by FEDECOVERA, R. L. and the National Association of Private Natural Reserves of Guatemala -ARNPG-, with the support of the University of Greenwich.

Senior authorities from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) and the National Council for Protected Areas (CONAP) also attended the launch, who are active partners in the project.

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[The fundamental building blocks for stability in Afghanistan: UK statement](#)

at UN Security Council

Thank you President,

I join others in thanking Deputy Special Representative Potzel, Ghada Waly, Executive Director, and Ms Fawzia Koofi for their sobering briefings and also UNAMA and the Secretary-General for his quarterly report.

As we've heard, nearly 60% of the population of Afghanistan officially requires humanitarian assistance, but the true need is much higher.

The World Bank predicts GDP will have contracted by one third by the end of this year, and the Taliban continues increased restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I cannot speak more eloquently than Fawzia Koofi did about the restrictions on freedom of movement that women and girls face – the political, economic, educational and social exclusion that they face.

UNICEF estimates the ban on schooling for girls has cost the Afghan economy at least \$500 million during the last year. But the human cost for each of these Afghan girls is immeasurable.

President,

Some Council Members appear determined to politicise the crisis in Afghanistan, and I think their assertions are neither accurate nor helpful.

The UK disbursed \$306 million in humanitarian and development assistance for Afghanistan last financial year, and we have committed a further \$306 million this financial year.

We are the second largest donor to the World Bank's Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund, and we continue to work with the World Bank, IMF and others on economic stabilisation.

We recognise the importance of restoring liquidity to the banking system, including a functioning Central Bank able to access Afghanistan's overseas reserves. But this requires an independent Central Bank operating transparently with professional leadership and proper controls in place to prevent funds being diverted to terrorism.

Calling for reserves simply to be returned before these essential steps are in place is neither responsible nor compatible with a genuine commitment to stopping terrorist financing.

President,

Humanitarian and financial support can help, but it will not resolve Afghanistan's problems unless the fundamental building blocks for stability are put in place. To do this, the Taliban must uphold, rather than repress

human rights, allow unhindered humanitarian access, meet counter-terrorism commitments made in the Doha Agreement, and they must take responsibility for stabilizing the economy.

This means creating an enabling environment for greater investment, including ensuring transparency on revenue and budget, and enabling women – half of the population – to contribute to economic activity.

Finally President,

I take the opportunity to welcome the appointment of Special Representative Otunbayeva. It is vital for Afghanistan's future that the Taliban cooperate with her and the UN, and we urge all members of the Council to support her as she implements UNAMA's critical mandate.

Thank you.

[UK experts drive Peru's ongoing response to February's oil spill in the Pacific Ocean](#)

- Team of experts from the United Kingdom carried out the workshop "Response to marine pollution: preparedness and best practices from the United Kingdom" with Peruvian authorities.
- More than 50 representatives from Peru's environmental, fisheries, and coast guard sectors actively participated in the four-day workshop.

Lima, 26th September. – Between 20 and 23 September, a team of UK-based pollution response experts from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), delivered the workshop "Marine Pollution Response: preparedness and best practise from the UK", with Peruvian Governmental authorities.

This 4-day workshop brought together over 50 representatives from Peruvian environment, fisheries and coastguard sectors, including officers from the Minister of Environment, the National Park Service and coastal municipalities. With the support of colleagues from British Embassy in Lima, the UK delegation shared lessons learned from historic UK incidents and discussed key legislation and preparedness principles to ensure an effective and timely response to marine pollution incidents.

The workshop also covered a range of topics including response options, use of satellite and drone technology, socio-economic impacts of spills, evaluating impacts to marine birds and marine mammals, post-spill monitoring

and hydrocarbon analysis and fingerprinting. It also included presentations from UK Deputy to the Secretary of State's Representative for Maritime and Salvage, and sessions from oiled wildlife response organisation Aiuka.

Bethany Graves, from the JNCC, said:

It's a pleasure to be here, sharing UK experience and knowledge and working closely with Peruvian Governmental agencies to explore opportunities to be better prepared. We have had an excellent week of workshops with good engagement and discussions.

We're grateful for the British Embassy Lima's help in the organisation of the workshop and we are glad to see that all who attended found it useful.

The workshop concluded with a table-top exercise in which lessons learned from the previous days were tested and cemented. After this workshop, the UK team will prepare a 'Recommendations for better Readiness' report to hand over in the next few months. This will include comments on Peru's National Contingency Plan and key gaps in preparedness as identified in the workshop (and shared from Peru agencies).

The British Ambassador to Peru, Gavin Cook added:

The oil spill off Lima was a wake-up call. But it's one the Peruvian government is responding to, in both managing the aftermath of the disaster and thinking longer-term. The UK is proud to be supporting this alongside our broad environmental work in Peru.

British expertise has a huge amount to offer – especially in the use of technology – and we look forward to continuing to share best practice and drive change.

The workshop was delivered under the Ocean Country Partnership Programme, a UK-led programme funded through the UK government's £500 million [Blue Planet Fund](#), which aims to help eligible countries reduce poverty, through supporting the sustainable management of their marine environment.

Workshop participants discussing during the table-top exercise.