

Planned elections in Ukraine are a sham and invasion is failing: UK statement to the OSCE

Over these past months, we have seen the courage of the Ukrainian people; the adeptness of their military; and their unyielding commitment to their values under the most testing of circumstances. The United Kingdom is proud to call itself a partner – and a friend – of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian counter-offensive marks a new phase. But it is as solemn as it is welcome. To the international community, the Ukrainian flag symbolises bravery, freedom and democracy. To those in Iziium, Balakliya, Kupyansk and the Kharkiv region, their national flag is not just a symbol – it is a lifeline. Because as the Ukrainian Armed Forces reclaim their territory, evidence emerges: reports of bodies showing signs of torture; reports of torture chambers; civilians, including children, amongst the dead. Beneath each wooden cross in Iziium lies a human being, one who can no longer tell us what has happened to them. For the Ukrainian men, women and children whose stories will be told through post mortem, we promise justice.

Time and time again, Ukrainians have demonstrated the resilience needed to secure victory in their fight for peace. And yet President Putin falsely maintains that the Russian offensive in the Donbas remains on track. The world can see that he is lying. The Russian army, and the Russian leadership, is in panic mode. We see appalling acts of desperation: increased shelling of civilians and civilian infrastructure, including the dam at Karachunivske Reservoir and the Pivdennoukrainsk nuclear power plant at Mykolaiv. On 17 September, four medical workers were killed by shelling while attempting to evacuate their patients from a hospital in Strilecha, in Kharkivska Oblast. With Russian military actions in Bucha and Mariupol, we saw the very worst of humanity. By contrast, people like these Ukrainian medical workers, killed while saving lives, show us the best of it. We offer our deepest condolences to their families.

Meanwhile, President Putin's proxies in the temporarily Russian controlled territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts scramble to organise sham referenda – a pitiful charade. Let us be clear: we will never recognise any Russian attempts to purportedly annex part of Ukraine's sovereign territory. These illegitimate referenda will not alter our approach. We will continue to support Ukraine's right to defend its territory.

Putin's sabre-rattling, and decision to mobilise parts of the Russian population is an admission that his invasion is failing. He continues to send tens of thousands of his own citizens to their deaths, ill equipped and badly led. We have seen reports overnight of over a thousand people arrested – another vicious assault on fundamental freedoms in Russia. And in Ukraine we have seen Russia's deplorable attempts to replenish its ranks with convicts –

qualified for little more than continuing the so-called “Special Military Operation” in the style in which it has been conducted thus far: with ineptitude and brutality. Ukraine must win; and we must ensure there is accountability and justice.

We join our partners in condemning the sentencing of Maxim Petrov and Dymtro Shabanov by an unrecognised and illegitimate court in the so-called Luhansk People’s Republic. As the OSCE Chair-in-Office and Secretary-General have repeatedly made clear, SMM national mission members were detained for simply performing their official duties – duties mandated by all 57 participating States. Russia is solely responsible for these actions, and we call for the immediate and unconditional release of our OSCE colleagues.

Indeed, the UK holds the Russian Federation responsible for the safety and welfare of all Prisoners of War and detained civilians in the non-Government controlled areas of Ukraine. 5 British Nationals and 5 other foreign nationals held by Russia-backed proxies are being safely returned. Russia must end the ruthless exploitation of prisoners of war and civilian detainees for political ends.

I join my Ukraine, US and EU colleagues in condemning the sentencing yesterday of the Deputy Leader of the Crimean Majlis Nariman Celâl, as well as Asan Akhmetov and Aziz Akhmetov. Mr Chair, we stand with Ukraine for the long haul, which is why my Prime Minister has vowed to match the UK’s 2022 military support to Ukraine in 2023. Russia must withdraw all of its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognised borders.

Mobile roaming cap to benefit Brits abroad

Press release

The UK has signed an agreement to cap charges for using data and making calls and texts in Norway and Iceland.



The UK has marked the first meeting of the UK-EEA EFTA Joint Committee, by signing a decision to cap charges for using data and making calls and texts in Norway and Iceland.

The cap is a world-first in an FTA, keeping costs low for holidaymakers and business travellers to Norway and Iceland.

International Trade Minister Conor Burns MP said:

This news builds on the landmark trade agreement between the UK and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, and is the first of its kind world-wide showing how the innovative trade deals we negotiate are bringing real benefits to British travellers.

I look forward to working with businesses across the UK to take advantage of deals that banish barriers, boost jobs and save money.

Our trade deal with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein signed last year aims to boost critical sectors like digital, financial, and professional business services, slash tariffs on top-quality British exports and support jobs in every corner of the UK.

The new FTA allows UK mobile operators to offer their customers surcharge-free mobile roaming in Norway and Iceland by creating a mechanism to cap the rates operators charges each other.

Background:

- Once this decision is in place, the UK will then implement secondary legislation which will be in place early next year. We will work with Mobile Operators to ensure that the savings secured from this cap are filtered down to consumers.
- Liechtenstein is not party to mobile roaming provisions due to their capacity. However, there is an option for this to be extended to them at a future date.

[AAIB Report: Britten Norman 2B-26 \(J8-VBI\), aircraft departed runway on landing](#)

News story

On landing at John A. Osborne Airport in Monserrat, a Britten Norman 2B-26 (J8-VBI) veered off the right side of the runway, 29 September 2021.



On landing, the pilot was unable to maintain directional control and reported the left brake was 'spongy'. The aircraft veered off the right side of the runway and impacted the bank of an adjacent drainage ditch. One passenger suffered minor injuries as a result.

An inspection of the braking system revealed a slight brake fluid leak from one of the pistons in the left outboard brake calliper. This would have prevented full brake pressure being achieved on the left brakes, resulting in an asymmetric braking effect. Also, difficulty in maintaining directional control was caused by use of the incorrect braking technique on landing.

The investigation identified shortcomings with the operator's manual and procedures, and with regulatory oversight. As a result, one Safety Recommendation was addressed to the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority to ensure that the operations manual complies with the regulations.

[Read the report.](#)

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FUSION22 conference: Coming to London's Science Museum

Press release

The world of fusion is coming to London's Science Museum at a new international conference.



FUSION22 takes place on Tuesday, October 18 at the Science Museum, London.

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- First of its kind global conference will showcase the goals and vision of the international fusion community
- Attendees can join virtually or in-person, and choose from a wide range of panel sessions and keynote speeches; registration is open to all at fusioniscoming.com
- Fusion promises safe, sustainable, low carbon energy for future generations

A new international conference at London's Science Museum will showcase the goals and vision of the global fusion community.

FUSION22 will explore the exciting developments in fusion that could lead to near limitless and low carbon energy in the future. It will also address the challenges the industry is facing to help accelerate the pace of development.

The hybrid event on Tuesday, October 18 will cover a range of thought-provoking panel sessions and keynote speeches, including:

- WHERE DOES FUSION FIT IN? What does the future of global energy supply look like and what is the problem fusion will solve?
- WHAT FUSION NEEDS: What are the challenges we face in getting fusion on the grid and how can we overcome these?
- WHERE ELSE WILL FUSION TECHNOLOGY BE USED? Where is fusion technology

likely to have the biggest impact outside of energy?

- HOW DO WE ENSURE FUSION WORKS FOR EVERYONE? What can we do to make sure the benefits from fusion energy act as a 'force for good' in the world?
- HOW WILL FUSION BE FUNDED? What is required across public and private funding to ensure fusion makes it to market?

Prof. Ian Chapman, UK Atomic Energy Authority Chief Executive, said:

"We are thrilled to be bringing FUSION22 to the iconic Science Museum this October. It's a unique opportunity to showcase the many exciting developments happening in the world of fusion right now, and hear from the people striving to deliver safe, sustainable, low carbon electricity to the grid.

"It's never been clearer that changes are needed to protect the planet for future generations, and fusion energy offers so much potential. But it's also one of the greatest scientific and engineering challenges of them all. FUSION22 brings us together to face these challenges head on, because together we believe fusion is coming."

FUSION22 is organised by UKAEA and the UK Fusion Cluster founding partners. Confirmed speakers include:

- Scott Hsu, Senior Advisor and Lead Fusion Coordinator, U.S. Department of Energy
- Dennis Whyte, Director of the MIT Plasma Science & Fusion Center
- Heike Freund, Chief Operating Officer, Marvel Fusion
- Tony Donné, Programme Manager of EUROfusion
- R. David Edelman, Chief Policy & Global Affairs Officer, TAE Technologies, Inc.
- Carly Anderson, Partner, Prime Movers Lab

There are a limited number of places to attend in person, with the virtual event open for all. Registration is now open for both at fusioniscoming.com.

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UK government takes next steps to boost domestic energy production

To bolster the UK's energy security, the UK government has today lifted the moratorium on shale gas production in England, and confirmed its support for a new oil and gas licensing round, expected to be launched by the North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) in early October.

In light of Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and weaponisation of energy,

the government is taking concrete steps to increase home-grown sources of energy, reduce the UK's reliance of foreign imports, and explore all possible options to boost domestic energy security. To do so, it is appropriate to pursue all means for increasing UK oil and gas production, including through new oil and gas licences and shale gas extraction.

Business and Energy Secretary Jacob Rees-Mogg said:

In light of Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and weaponisation of energy, strengthening our energy security is an absolute priority, and – as the Prime Minister said – we are going to ensure the UK is a net energy exporter by 2040.

To get there we will need to explore all avenues available to us through solar, wind, oil and gas production – so it's right that we've lifted the pause to realise any potential sources of domestic gas.

The new licensing round is expected to lead to over 100 new licences, as [previously announced by the Prime Minister](#), forming part of the government's plans to accelerate domestic energy supply. Under the new licensing round, which follows the outcome of the Climate Compatibility Checkpoint, the NSTA is expected to make a number of new 'blocks' of the UK Continental Shelf available, for applicants to bid for licences.

These licences will enable developers to search for commercially viable oil and gas sources within the areas of their licences. Developers will still need to seek regulatory approval for any activities conducted within their licensed area, such as drilling or construction of infrastructure.

Increasing energy supplies with a new licensing round and lifting the moratorium on shale gas production will help boost the UK's energy resilience, and help achieve the ambition to make the UK a net energy exporter by 2040.

The government is today formally lifting the pause on shale gas extraction and will consider future applications for Hydraulic Fracturing Consent with the domestic and global need for gas in mind and where there is local support. Developers will need to have the necessary licences, permissions and consents in place before they can commence operations.

The decision comes alongside the publication of the British Geological Survey's scientific review into shale gas extraction, which was [commissioned earlier this year](#). The review recognised that we have limited current understanding of UK geology and onshore shale resources, and the challenges of modelling geological activity in relatively complex geology sometimes found in UK shale locations.

There have only been three test wells which have been hydraulically fractured in the UK to date. It is clear that we need more sites drilled in order to gather better data and improve the evidence base and we are aware that some

developers are keen to assist with this process.

Lifting the pause on shale gas extraction will enable drilling to gather this further data, building an understanding of UK shale gas resources and how we can safely carry out shale gas extraction in the UK where there is local support.

We are scaling up renewables, nuclear, and lower carbon energy sources, to boost Britain's energy security in the long term, and reduce our exposure to high fossil fuel prices set by global markets outside our control. However, there will continue to be ongoing demand for oil and gas over the coming years during this transition, with oil and gas needed to maintain the security of the UK's energy supply. Making the most of our own domestic resources under the North Sea will make us less dependent on foreign imports.

- The Written Ministerial Statement formally lifting the moratorium is available shortly (link to be added in when available).
- The government's support for the licensing round follows the introduction of the new [climate compatibility checkpoint](#) that opened in late 2021, the checkpoint is a new measure enabling ministers to review the awarding of new licences in light of the UK's climate change objectives.
- Read the [government response to the Climate Compatibility Checkpoint consultation](#).
- Also published today is the government's response to the [consultation](#) on the UK Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment 4 (OESEA4) Environmental Report. The government has taken account of the responses received during the consultation period in making the decision to adopt its draft plan/programme for licensing and leasing areas for future offshore energy developments. This will pave the way for future licensing or leasing for offshore oil and gas, offshore gas and carbon storage, offshore renewables, and offshore hydrogen, in relevant waters of the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process of appraisal through which environmental protection and sustainable development are considered and factored into decisions relating to government plans and programmes (such as those for offshore energy infrastructure). It is a statutory obligation designed to ensure that environmental factors are taken into account at the broader plan-making stage. Further [information on the Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\) stages and process is available here](#).