

Addressing underlying factors of instability in the Sahel

Thank you, Mr President, and we're grateful, as ever, to Mr Chambas for his report on the situation and for UNOWAS activity during the first six months of its new three year mandate.

It's clear from his report that COVID-19 has added a further layer of complexity to an already difficult situation. And the UK appreciates, Mr Chambas, that you are having to adjust in the face of this new dynamic.

I am also very grateful to Ms Ibrahim for transposing the analysis we read in the reports into a real human story. She brought into stark relief the challenges of climate change for societies in the region and the need for good governance with development and security. And as she put it, for a green deal – issues that we the UK care about as the forthcoming hosts of COP26 and the 'rebuilding better' strand of our FFD work.

Now, we know, Mr President, that the confluence of negative factors in the Sahel presents a unique and complex challenge. Chronic underdevelopment, extreme poverty, marginalisation, insecurity and governance vacuums easily filled by malevolent actors and competition over resources exacerbated by climate change, again, as Ms Ibrahim said.

The COVID-19 pandemic risks exacerbating these issues, but it did not create them. And it remains critical that we sustain efforts to address the underlying drivers of poverty and instability in the region.

Mr President, the UK is deeply troubled by the deteriorating humanitarian situation outlined by SRSG Chambas. With over 15 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and over 3 million people displaced in the Sahel alone, it is critical that our response is able to reach those most in need. In this context, we urge all parties to ensure unhindered humanitarian access and movement to allow the delivery of essential goods and services. Without this, food insecurity and protection needs will continue to rise. This is particularly the case for women and girls who are facing increased exposure to gender-based violence and other human rights abuses.

The UK shares others' concerns about the deteriorating security situation, particularly in Mali and in Burkina Faso. We call on all parties to respect human rights and international humanitarian law. In this respect we should be mindful of the tragic consequences of violations, both on a human level and as a driver of further violence. And we call on all the G5 Sahel governments to undertake fair and transparent investigations of alleged violations by state security forces and to hold those responsible to account.

The rise in extremist and terrorist violence in the Lake Chad basin is also deeply troubling, including the recent targeting of a UN humanitarian facility. Such attacks threaten to increase displacement and the number of

people in IDP camps still further.

With presidential elections fast approaching in a number of countries, it has never been more important to prioritise prevention and preserve stability. The UK is particularly alarmed by violence in Guinea in recent months and the prospect of seeing more as we approach those elections. Preventing backsliding on governance, accountability, access to justice and human rights is critical to ensure environments conducive to free, fair, timely and credible elections.

So it's our sincere hope, Mr President, that 2020 will be, as Mr Chambas said, defined by democratic consolidation, by credible, inclusive and peaceful elections, and where those who are required by those elections to leave power ensure a smooth transition of power.

Returning to the global coronavirus pandemic, the UK is clear-eyed about the challenges faced by vulnerable countries across West Africa and the Sahel, and it's working hard to support those most in need. We're committed to a global response. And last month, the UK hosted the Global Vaccine Summit, raising \$8.8 billion to support immunisation of 300 million children. We've announced a total of almost \$1 billion for the COVID-19 response, including \$20 million for the African Union's Response Fund. Of course, the international response to COVID-19 should not divert vital resources from other critical work that seeks to tackle the underlying drivers of poverty and instability. And we were grateful to hear that UN-wide coordination with regard to implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel has improved. It is essential that the entire UN system, including critical development entities such as UNDP mobilise in support of peacebuilding efforts in the region.

Mr Chambas, you and the UN system across your area of responsibility have an incredibly difficult job in a region with a complex nexus of challenges. Thank you for all you and the UN operations across the region are doing to tackle these challenges. It's critical for the people of this region that we succeed.

Thank you, Mr President.

**[UN Human Rights Council 44:
Interactive Dialogue with the Working
Group on Human Rights and
Transnational Corporations and Other](#)**

Business Enterprises

World news story

This UK statement was delivered during the Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on the Issue of Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises



The Human Rights Council takes place in Geneva.

Thank you, Madame President

The UK welcomes efforts by the Working Group to draw greater attention to links between anti-corruption and human rights agendas. We urge Governments and businesses to continue working together to share best practice and drive up standards.

The UK remains a strong advocate for the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. As referenced in our National Action Plan, we have created a number of instruments to motivate good corporate behaviour and respect for human rights, including the Bribery Act, which ensures companies can be held accountable for acts of bribery committed anywhere in the world.

Our Business Integrity Initiative helps businesses guard against both corruption and human rights abuses when trading with emerging markets in developing countries.

The Working Group's report discusses public procurement, where Governments have the opportunity to harness their spending power to tackle both corruption and human rights abuses. The UK Government has taken significant steps to tackle modern slavery in our commercial activities and this year published our first Government Modern Slavery Statement. The UK government has an established anti-corruption strategy tackling all types of corruption and fraud including through procurement.

Madame Chair,

Which international forums and processes does the Working Group believe we

should look to in driving forward greater policy coherence across human rights and anti-corruption agendas?

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Beauty salons set to reopen for some services next week under new government guidelines

- Practical guidelines to allow more beauty businesses, including tattoo studios, nail bars and spas, to reopen for some services from 13 July
- businesses must be able to meet the COVID-19 secure guidelines developed in consultation with the beauty industry to reopen, protecting customers and workers
- only services that do not involve work in the highest risk zone – directly in front of the face – should be made available to clients

Beauty salons, nail bars, tattoo and massage studios, physical therapy businesses and spas across England will be able to reopen safely from Monday 13 July under new government plans, announced today (9 July).

Updated COVID-19 secure guidance sets out the measures that those providing close contact services should follow to protect staff and customers. Only services that do not involve work in the highest risk zone – directly in front of the face – should be made available to clients. This means that treatments such as face waxing, eyelash treatments, make-up application and facial treatments, should not be provided until government advice changes, due to the much greater risk of transmission.

Where 2 metre social distancing cannot be maintained, for example when providing a treatment, the person providing the service should wear further protection in addition to any that they may usually wear. This should be a clear visor that covers the face, or the use of a screen or other barrier that protects the practitioner and the customer from respiratory droplets caused by sneezing, coughing or speaking.

The government has worked with a range of stakeholders in the beauty industry to develop the measures close contact services will need to consider to become COVID-19 secure, including:

- using screens or barriers to separate clients from each other, and to separate practitioners from clients, such as in nail salons
- operating an appointment-only booking system to minimise the number of people on the premises at any one time

- keeping the activity time involved to a minimum
- increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning, as well as regularly cleaning equipment or using disposable equipment where possible
- avoiding skin to skin contact and wearing gloves where it is not crucial to the service, such as in nail bars and tanning salons
- maintaining sufficient spacing between customer chairs
- not allowing food or drink, other than water, to be consumed in the salon by customers
- making sure a limited and fixed number of workers work together, if they have to be in close proximity to do their jobs

Business Secretary, Alok Sharma said:

We have been clear throughout this crisis that we want as many businesses as possible to reopen, but we must be confident it is safe for them to do so.

From Monday 13 July thousands more businesses which offer close contact services like nail and beauty salons will be able to welcome customers back in a way that is safe for both workers and the public.

Enabling these often small, independent businesses to reopen is yet another step in our plan to kickstart the economy to support jobs and incomes across the country.

The guidance also applies to businesses that operate in different locations, such as massage therapists working in people's homes, and those learning in vocational training environments.

Businesses will need to keep records of staff and customers and share these with NHS Test and Trace where requested, to help identify people who may have been exposed to the virus.

Businesses will only be able to open from these dates once they have completed a risk assessment and are confident they are managing the risks. They must have taken the necessary steps to become COVID-19 secure in line with the current Health and Safety legislation.

Employers should display a downloadable notice in their workplaces to show their employees, customers and other visitors to their workplace, that they have followed this guidance.

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 9 July 2020

[Coronavirus press conference \(9 July 2020\)](#)

For months now, our lives have been on hold.

When the call came in March, we pressed pause on many of the things that brighten our lives.

Meals with friends.

Trips to the cinema or theatre.

We had to close our gyms and swimming pools.

Cancel our holidays.

And postpone some of our favourite events.

But as we've made huge progress against this disease, we've gradually seen the things we love return.

Today, I'm very pleased to announce we can go a little bit further. As of this weekend, our artists, musicians and dancers can start performing live outside to audiences. We'll also have the resumption of recreational sport, followed later by the reopening of our gyms, swimming pools and leisure centres.

Normal life is slowly returning.

This is an important milestone for our performing artists, who have been waiting patiently in the wings since March. Of course we won't see crowds flooding into their venues. But from 11 July, our theatres, operas, dance and music shows can start putting on outdoor performances to socially distanced audiences.

That means theatregoers can experience a live play for the first time in months at places like the stunning Minack Theatre in Cornwall. And music lovers can attend Glyndebourne this summer.

We are taking various measures to make these places safe as they reopen. Venue capacity will be reduced, and organisations encouraged to move to electronic ticketing, to help test and trace.

But our performing artists deserve an audience. And now they will be getting one.

And while those outdoor performances get underway, we will be working with the public health experts to carefully pilot a number of indoor performances – from the London Symphony Orchestra at St Luke’s, to Butlins – to work out how we can confidently usher socially-distanced audiences indoors as soon as possible.

At the same time, we’re funding scientific studies to help us understand and mitigate some specific public health risks, like the impact of singing, wind and brass instruments on transmission.

The more we know about coronavirus in every setting, the safer we will be.

We’re also taking steps through the planning system to protect theatres and venues from demolition or change of use, and of course all of this comms on top of the unprecedented £1.57 billion package of emergency support to help arts, heritage and cultural institutions weather the COVID storm.

But, of course, we want to see all of our venues open as soon as it’s safe to do so.

Today’s announcement brings us a further step closer towards that reality.

Having allowed hairdressers to reopen, beauticians, tattooists, spas, tanning salons and other close-contact services can now do the same I’m pleased to say from Monday. Of course that will be subject to some restrictions on particularly high risk services.

As I’ve seen myself at the Royal Academy this morning, the National Gallery, and as we’ll see shortly from National Museums Liverpool, our cultural institutions are beginning also to welcome back visitors.

As these places begin to reopen their doors, I’m really urging people to get out there and to play their part. Buy the tickets for outdoor plays and music recitals, get to your local gallery and support your local businesses.

We have seen in recent weeks how our landlords, waiters and shop assistants have welcomed customers back with open arms, while doing so much to keep their communities safe. It’s time to give other businesses those same opportunities.

The Chancellor this week set out a bumper package of tourism and hospitality tax breaks, to get these industries firing on all cylinders once more and protect the millions of people who work for them.

That means a VAT cut on everything from tickets to shows, theatres, amusement parks, museums and zoos.

Lower costs for hotels, inns, caravan and campsites.

Vouchers for food and non-alcoholic drinks.

I’m urging the British people to make the most of this summer safely. We need them to support the places that we all love.

And today there is good news for our nation's fitness.

As we all know, exercise is incredibly important for both physical and mental health. Even at the height of lockdown it was considered an essential activity – with countless people hitting their parks for their daily run or transforming their living rooms into temporary gyms.

From this weekend onwards, millions of people will be able to rejoin their local sports teams as soon as their organisations publish approved guidance. Recreational cricket is back on this weekend. Five-a-side football, basketball, hockey and countless other sports will follow shortly after.

From this Saturday, they'll also be able to enjoy outdoor pools and waterparks.

And from Saturday 25th, people will no longer have to work out in the park or on their living room floor. They'll be able to get back into their gyms, their indoor swimming pools, their leisure centres, and jump on the spin bike or treadmill for the first time in months.

Now we've made a number of positive visits to gyms in recent weeks, and of course had hoped to do this sooner. But we really do have to phase this properly. We will be giving gyms the certainty, clarity and time they need to reopen safely, so that the maximum number can open their doors in just two weeks' time.

Again, we've worked intensively with both professional bodies and the experts to get us to this point, and facilities will have to take a number of measures to protect their communities. That includes for example using timed booking systems to limit the number of people using the facility at any one time, and reduced class sizes. Equipment will be spaced out, and there will be enhanced cleaning throughout.

As always, the public will need to do their bit and follow the guidance sensibly and safely. All of the measures we are taking are conditional and reversible. And we will not hesitate to impose lockdowns where there are local spikes – as we saw in Leicester, where things remain closed and of course in any other place when that is necessary.

But the return of gyms and recreational sport is a vital part of our battle against coronavirus.

We need to get the nation to get match-fit to defeat this disease.

And our fight began with a collective effort, and I really hope it will end with one. At the beginning, we all stayed home to protect the NHS and save lives.

Now the British public has a new part to play.

It's time to eat out to help out.

To enjoy the arts to help out.

And to work out to help out.

It's over to all of you to help the country recover safely.

Thank you.

Suspension of scallop fishing in parts of the North Sea

News story

Scallop fishing in the North Sea around Dogger Bank will be suspended for four weeks from Sunday 12 July 2020



Fresh sea scallops

Scallop fishing in the North Sea around Dogger Bank will be suspended for four weeks from Sunday 12 July to Saturday 8 August to enable data gathering about the state of the shellfish stock.

Following a call for evidence, and engaging with the scallop industry, the four UK Fisheries Administrations have taken the decision to temporarily close the fishery.

A week long consultation took place earlier this month to which a total of 14 responses were received. The majority of responses shared the concerns of the Fisheries Administrations that there is insufficient scientific data currently available to be confident that the scallop stocks in the area can be sustained if these levels of fishing are maintained.

The closure will be in ICES rectangles 39F1, 39F2, 39F3, 38F1, 38F2, 38F3, 37F1 and 37F2. The closure will be reviewed based on the scientific data gathered during the suspension. Evidence to be collated will include information on the age of the stock and whether the stock is spawning.

The Fisheries Administrations appreciate the work that industry has done to date and are committed to continuing to liaise with the scallop industry throughout the closure, during the review and in any subsequent decisions or actions that result from the data gathering.

Fishing licences will be varied to reflect the situation.

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