

# Crisis in Venezuela: Foreign Office statement, 17 June 2020

Press release

FCO spokesperson statement on the new steps by the Maduro regime that further subvert democratic process in Venezuela.



The UK is concerned at new steps by the Maduro regime that further subvert democratic process in Venezuela. We repeat our call for peaceful and democratic resolution of the political crisis in the country and early presidential elections.

A Foreign & Commonwealth Office spokesperson said:

The United Kingdom is deeply concerned at the Venezuelan Supreme Court's decision to announce the appointment of members to the National Electoral Council (CNE) on 12 June without the approval of the National Assembly, in clear contravention of Venezuela's Constitution.

Presidential elections in 2018 elections were not free, fair or credible. Since January 2019 the United Kingdom has been clear and consistent in its recognition of Juan Guaidó as the interim constitutional President of Venezuela.

It is vital that the people of Venezuela should be given the opportunity to vote soon in presidential elections that are free, fair and effectively overseen. The UK considers this an essential step to ending the political and other crises that Venezuela is suffering and to restoring democracy.

## **Further information**

Published 17 June 2020

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# [G7 urges China to reconsider national security law](#)

News story

International community calls upon China to adhere to its legally binding commitments and respect the autonomy and the freedom of the people of Hong Kong.



Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has issued a statement alongside his G7 counterparts to stress the international community's grave concern about China's decision to impose a national security law on Hong Kong. The UK has been at the forefront of diplomatic efforts to secure the statement from the influential group of nations.

[The statement](#) says that the imposition of the law is not in line with the Hong Kong Basic Law, or China's international commitments under the principles of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, which was signed by China and the UK in 1984. It calls on China to reconsider its decision.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Today's statement shows the strength of international concern over China's proposed new national security law for Hong Kong. As the G7, we are calling on China to adhere to its legally binding international commitments and respect the autonomy and the freedom of the people of Hong Kong.

The statement issued today by the Foreign Ministers of the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the High Representative of the European Union, says that the proposed national

security law would risk seriously undermining the “One Country, Two Systems” principle and the territory’s high degree of autonomy. It would also jeopardise the system which has allowed Hong Kong to become one of the world’s most prosperous regions.

## Further information

Published 17 June 2020

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# [Oliver Dowden’s statement on coronavirus \(COVID-19\): 17 June 2020](#)

## [Coronavirus press conference \(17 June 2020\)](#)

Good afternoon, and welcome to today’s Downing Street press briefing. I’d like to start with the daily update on the latest data on coronavirus.

The first slide shows cases confirmed with a test:

- 7,121,976 tests for coronavirus have now been carried out or posted out in the UK. This includes 140,359 tests carried out or posted yesterday.
- 299,251 people have tested positive, an increase of 1,115 cases since yesterday.

The second slide shows the latest data from hospitals:

- 387 people were admitted to hospital with coronavirus in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on 14 June, that is down from 435 a week earlier, and down from a peak of 3,432 on 1 April.
- 379 coronavirus patients are currently in mechanical ventilation beds in the UK, down from 494 a week ago, and down from a peak of 3,301 on 12 April.

The third slide shows what is happening in hospitals across the country:

- There are now 5,308 people in hospital with coronavirus in the UK, down 13% from 6,123 a week ago and down from a peak of 20,698 on 12 April.
- As you’ll see from the graphs while there is some variation, most nations and regions of the UK are broadly following a similar pattern.

The fourth slide shows the daily figures for those who have sadly lost their lives after testing positive for coronavirus:

- Across all settings, the total number of deaths now stands at 42,153. That’s sadly an increase of 184 fatalities since yesterday.
- When you measure that on a 7-day rolling average, the daily number of

deaths currently stands at 146, down from a peak of 943 on 14 April.

As you'll see from those slides we're making important progress, and today marks another milestone.

In just under an hour's time, the best league in the world will be back up and running after a 100 day pause.

All but five countries will be airing tonight's games – underlining football's global reach and the soft power of UK sport. The Premier League is returning and the world will be watching.

Of course it will be very different to what we're used to. But there is no doubt that this is a hugely symbolic moment.

An important step forward in our careful journey back towards normality, players back at their place of work, and a boost for our football loving nation.

We've worked really hard with the football authorities, police and medical experts to get to this point. But we do need fans to play their part too.

So please, look after your fellow fans and your communities by watching from home. To keep the home advantage, support from home.

All 92 remaining Premier League games will be shown live on television, and I'm delighted that I and others managed to work hard to get a third of them on free-to-air channels.

Friday will be the first on free-to-air, with Norwich versus Southampton. Then an important day on Saturday, that will be the first ever Premier League game on the BBC, followed by the Merseyside Derby again free to air on Sunday.

And there will be extended highlights of all the games free to air. So you won't have to miss a single goal.

Our sports men and women have set some incredible examples during this pandemic, using their profiles to support worthwhile causes across the UK.

England's men's and women's cricket teams have donated half a million pounds towards charitable causes.

Rugby League's Cheshire West Bank Bears have delivered food and parcels to the elderly.

And of course, England and Manchester United footballer Marcus Rashford has made the front pages and the back pages for the very best reasons – highlighting the struggles facing many families during this difficult time but that is of course in addition to the fantastic work he's been doing helping to feed millions of children through the FareShare charity.

The last three months have demonstrated the immense power of sport. It brings

us together through kindness and common humanity.

I was struck by this last week when I teamed up with the His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge and some of Britain's biggest sports stars on mental health awareness.

We chatted about the need to deliver generational change in perceptions, and develop tools for good mental health – whether you're a sports star at the top of your game, or a junior just starting out, or a fan going through a difficult period. As we get sport back, I really think this is a great opportunity for all of us to be much more open about talking about mental health.

The sports recovery was never just about elite sports. I know countless people are itching to get back to their gyms and leisure centres, to their five-a-side leagues and all their other normal fitness activities.

We're working closely with the sector to get grassroots and community sport back up and running as soon as it is safe to do so, with an aim of the start of July at the very earliest. And as we continue our efforts to get children back to school, I want to focus on the role sport can play in improving young people's physical and indeed their mental health.

Today is an important moment in our recovery. The return of elite sport has provided a model to follow. One based which is based on close partnership working with government, sport and the medics to bring it back safely.

It's a model we are applying to other much-loved and much-missed parts of our economy – in particular the performing arts.

I know they face enormous challenges, particularly given the impact of social distancing on live venues, and I am looking hard at how we can address those challenges.

Over the last few weeks and months, I have been talking extensively and intensively with people from across the UK's cultural sector to find a way through these issues – from some of our most creative directors and producers, to those running our greatest museums, theatres and music venues.

An important part of this is to get performances back up and running again. We have made a lot of progress through both the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and indeed the Entertainment and Events working group which sits within that. However, it is clear that we need greater flexibility to overcome some of the very specific and practical obstacles to the return of live performance.

That's why over the next week we will be convening experts in a targeted way – bringing together some of our leading performers in theatre, choirs and orchestras with medical experts and advisers.

The idea is they will work together in detail on to develop that roadmap which is so badly needed to performing safely, with a particular focus on piloting innovative ideas that may permit live performances.

I know how essential our theatres, our music venues and the performing arts are to our wider cultural ecosystem.

Culture is our calling card. It's respected around the world, and I am determined to work with them and across government to support it and to preserve its world leading position.

Today's return of live football represents a significant milestone. But I hope it's just another step towards normality, to be followed by many more in the months to come.

Thank you.

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## [The sustainable recovery, investor collaboration on COVID-19 recovery and the climate emergency](#)

Good afternoon everyone and thank you to the London Stock Exchange for organising this event.

Many people across the world are looking to governments during this global emergency to provide leadership and clarity to overcome the unprecedented challenges that we are facing.

Countries across the globe have taken the extraordinary measures to shut down large swathes of their economies in order to combat the coronavirus public health emergency.

In the UK, we did this on 23 March (2020) and we also launched a series of major policy initiatives to support businesses and individuals through the pandemic. Our aim has been to protect businesses, workers and consumers through these measures.

And while we will sadly not be able to save every business and every job, we hope that our measures have provided some certainty and consistency of support.

So as we emerge from the public health pandemic, we not only want to support businesses to bounce back as quickly as possible, but also to do so in a way that meets the UK's big, structural challenges.

This is why we want to deliver a green recovery. And we want to do that in partnership with business and finance.

I am here today, as the Business Secretary in the UK government, and as President for COP26, to underline the role you, the business community, can

play in that joint endeavour.

Because finance and investment are the lifeblood of net zero projects – and we can only meet this challenge together.

## **1. Experience working in the private sector**

I know the role finance can play in delivering this change, having worked in corporate finance myself for over 15 years before I came into politics.

I know the drive to deliver a return on investment and the search for growth areas in the economy.

When I worked in the banking sector, certainly at the start of it, green finance was a nascent initiative.

But things have changed and they do change.

So much so that today we have a former Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, whose warning that if some companies fail to adjust to a net zero world, they will fail to exist.

The risks are clear, but actually the opportunities are clearer yet.

And actually it is worth pointing out that since 1990, the UK economy has grown by 75% but at the same time we have cut emissions by 43%.

In the UK we have shown that green growth is possible.

The International Energy Agency has estimated that \$13.5 trillion of public and private investment in the global energy sector alone will be required between 2015 and 2030 to meet the Paris Agreement targets.

And the International Renewable Energy Agency recently found that renewable energy would bring returns of between 3-8 dollars on every dollar invested.

BlackRock found that in the first quarter of 2020, during the pandemic, 94% of a set of sustainable funds outperformed their non-sustainable counterparts.

So my message is simple, and I say this as a former financier to the current cohort: the UK is the place for you to invest in green assets.

And you will be welcomed and right to do so.

## **2. BEIS**

My department, the business department, is leading work to support a green recovery.

Helping our world-leading offshore wind industry reach 40GW by 2030.

Building the first fully-deployed carbon capture storage cluster by the

mid-2020s.

Supporting energy intensive industries as they move to low-carbon techniques.

Helping to improve the energy-efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals.

And delivering 2 million new high-quality jobs in clean growth over the next decade.

Today, nearly half a million people across our country are employed in the low carbon economy and its supply chains.

And recovering from this pandemic makes these projects more necessary and more important than ever. And many of them require private finance to deliver.

Which is why I am currently engaging with businesses across the country on the opportunities that arise from our net zero commitment and how they can support a green recovery.

And we will continue to do so, so I invite all of you to [contribute to our thinking by submitting written responses to the questions](#) that we have set out on GOV.UK, and if you'd like to know how to do it then please get in touch with us.

But of course this is alongside our [Green Finance Strategy](#), which aims to accelerate investment in green infrastructure.

And my department will continue to work at pace to deliver these policy commitments over the course of this Parliament.

### **3. COP26**

And now, as we look forward to COP26 next November (2021), our aim is to ramp up ambition towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

We want all countries to submit more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, committing to further cuts in carbon emissions by 2030.

With all nations committing to reaching net zero emissions as soon as possible.

And ahead of COP26, we have defined 5 areas which need particular attention:

- clean energy
- clean transport
- nature based solutions
- adaptation and resilience
- and, of course, making all of this possible, finance

Whenever I mention the 5 campaigns, I always make a point of mentioning finance last.



Because, from preserving ecosystems, to manufacturing electric cars and solar panels, it all needs to be paid for.

Again and again, I have seen first-hand how finance turns good ideas into action.

In January this year, I helped launch East Africa's first 'green bond' on the Nairobi securities exchange, followed by its dual listing on the London Stock Exchange. Helping to fund environmentally friendly housing in Nairobi.

And, through the Powering Past Coal Alliance, the UK has worked with Climate Action 100+, Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change, UN Principles for Responsible Investment and Ceres, all of whom are here today, to help align coal finance and investments with the aims of the Paris Agreement.

So your contribution will be absolutely central to a successful COP26 summit next year.

And ahead of COP, we want to see investors take crucial actions, such as setting a target for net zero and publishing a clear transition plan on how to achieve this.

And this will be underpinned by scenario analyses and of course, methodology reviews.

And while we have seen progress on the Task-Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures, this must accelerate.

And I urge you all to continue signing up to the recommendations of the TCFD to build a greener and more resilient financial system.

In February, I joined Mark Carney to launch the COP26 Finance Action Plan to help private finance support the global economy transition to net zero.

Last year at the UN, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced a doubling of the UK's international climate finance commitment to £11.6 billion over 2021 to 2025.

This, in turn, will mobilise further finance from public and private sources. Helping us meet and indeed move beyond the 100-billion-dollar goal, as we begin discussions in the UNFCCC on the goal that will replace it from 2025.

Since 2011, the UK's international climate finance has already supported over 100 countries and helped to reduce or avoid a total of 16 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, which is equivalent of taking 3.3 million passenger vehicles off the road for a year.

Our UK Pact programme has been part of this.

Since last year, it has helped financial institutions around the world drive down emissions.

Projects in Mexico and China, for example, helped harmonise national

definitions of green bonds with global ones. Giving global investors the confidence to invest.

And I can announce today that, from August we will be launching the first round of our [UK PACT Green Recovery Challenge Fund](#).

This is a £12 million challenge fund, that British and international organisations can bid into, to support countries in Africa, Asia and South America to develop their green industries. This will major on green finance and ways that companies can increase transparency and the disclosure of financial risks.

The UK government will fund the best projects and approaches to be deployed globally, and share UK expertise to support others with their own green recovery.

## **Conclusion**

So in conclusion I hope you take away from today the clear message that you and your organisations are absolutely vital in supporting the green recovery and transition to net zero.

Not only because it's the right policy, but because it is the right business and investment decision.

Because government will stand behind you every step of the way when you make these decisions.

So we can build a better world, through our economic recovery together.

Thank you.

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## **[ESFA Update: 17 June 2020](#)**

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Latest information and actions from the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, schools, colleges, local authorities and further education providers