

## Foreign Secretary: Rosh Hashanah message



Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

I send my warmest wishes to the British Jewish community and to Jewish communities around the world for the Jewish New Year and high holidays.

Rosh Hashanah is a special time to reflect. This year many will reflect on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen Belsen. My father grew up knowing that the loved ones he left behind when he fled Czechoslovakia were systematically slaughtered for one simple reason. They were Jews.

I would like to reassure the Jewish community in the UK and worldwide: the UK is committed to your safety and wellbeing, and stands alongside you in the fight against racism and intolerance.

I thank the community for their invaluable contribution to the UK and to our heritage, and wish you all a happy and peaceful new year. Shana Tova and Chatima Tova!

Published 27 September 2019

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## UK aid to boost access to finance for

## sub-Saharan Africa

- UK aid to mobilise over £500 million of private sector investment, creating over 50,000 jobs in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The package will support financial start-ups and entrepreneurs and boost economic growth across the region.
- It will also give millions of people in Africa better access to financial services.

A new UK aid package will help mobilise £500 million in private sector investment and create 50,000 jobs across sub-Saharan Africa, International Development Secretary Alok Sharma announced today [Friday 27 September 2019].

The support will help small financial services businesses and entrepreneurs to grow – creating jobs and boosting economic growth.

It will also give 12.5 million people across Africa better access to financial services including bank accounts and loans.

The UK has committed £90 million to Financial Sector Deepening Africa which will help the poorest Africans manage their money better.

Millions of African adults, many of them women, do not have access to the modern financial services they need to help buy food, pay bills, and send money to family members. Women will especially benefit, given they are likely to earn less and are 20 per cent less likely than men to have a bank account.

It will also drive a further £244 million of private sector and public sector investment into projects, such as housing, health and education.

After supporting the development of Africa's first corporate green bond in Nigeria, Financial Sector Deepening Africa is working towards the close of the first green bond in Kenya – which will raise funds to build environmentally-friendly housing. The bond will be a first for East Africa and a second across the continent.

This comes after the International Development Secretary announced a new Infrastructure Commission in August, bringing together leading experts to boost quality infrastructure projects in developing countries.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

I am committed to mobilising the private sector to help African nations make the most of their enormous potential. The growth of the green bond market in Africa will help to realise this

potential, as well as supporting climate resilient infrastructure.

This new UK aid package will reduce poverty by mobilising private sector investment in infrastructure, creating jobs and boosting access to finance.

I have recently announced an Infrastructure Commission whose aim will be to boost investment in green, sustainable infrastructure.

## Notes to editors

- Financial Sector Deepening Africa, a not-for-profit organisation which works in 28 countries, has helped more than 3 million people, 39% of whom are female, get better access to financial services like bank accounts and loans. It has also supported financial technology firms, pension funds and payment platforms.
- Next January, the UK will host the UK-Africa Investment Summit in London. The summit will bring together businesses and governments to promote both the investment opportunities across Africa and the scale of the UK's investment offer.
- The Department for International Development has commissioned a survey on UK attitudes to ethical investing. The [interim results of the 'Investing In A Better World' survey of over 6,000 people conducted by PwC can be found here.](#)
- The International Development Infrastructure Commission will be made up of UK and international business leaders, bringing the very best of British expertise, and will make recommendations to improve the planning, delivery and financing of infrastructure projects. The focus will be to help make investment in infrastructure in developing countries more attractive to businesses and investors.
- Acorn, a Kenya-based real estate development company, is set to close the country's first certified green bond, raising finance for the construction of environmentally-friendly student accommodation in Nairobi. This is a landmark moment for the "Green Bonds Programme Kenya", a partner initiative between Financial Sector Deepening Africa which is backed by UK aid, Kenya Bankers Association, Nairobi Securities Exchange, Climate Bonds Initiative and the Dutch Development Bank.
- In April 2019, Access Bank issued Africa's first certified corporate green bond in Nigeria, raising N15 billion (\$41 million) to fund climate-smart green projects in manufacturing, transport and agriculture sectors, helping to pave the way for Nigeria to develop into a low-

carbon economy.

- The Access Bank issuance is the first corporate bond to benefit from the Nigerian Green Bond Market Development Programme launched in June 2018, by Financial Sector Deepening Africa, Climate Bonds Initiative and securities exchange company, the FMDQ Group.

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## Extra £1.5 million available to eliminate chemical and biological munitions on the battlefield

To keep our Armed Forces and personnel safe, the UK and US governments are offering up to £1.5 million for new technologies to access, disable and/or destroy munitions and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) containing chemical and biological agents.

Following a successful first phase, the UK's Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is launching a Phase 2 'Don't Blow It' competition to fund emerging innovations, at technology readiness level (TRL) 3 and above to develop full-scale prototypes.

The funding comes from the UK Ministry of Defence and the US Department of Defense, with the competition operating under an existing memorandum of understanding between the two nations.

Under the [Chemical Weapons Convention](#), all [member states](#) are obligated to destroy any chemical weapons they own or possess, or that they abandoned on the territory of another member state. Whilst destruction technologies exist for this purpose, they are not appropriate for use in all circumstances.

Recent events have increased the focus on the need for a toolkit to enable rapid and effective disablement or irreversible destruction of smaller caches discovered in resource-limited environments.

Through this competition, DASA is seeking novel or innovative new concepts or adaptations of current technologies. The solutions will ultimately enable more rapid, effective and flexible destruction methods than are used for large stockpiles, and reduce logistical support requirements, whilst maximising ease of operation, transportability and ruggedness of the equipment.

This competition is focused on three main objectives:

- Access: gain access to munitions, IEDs and bulk containers without relying on the original design features, such as filling ports

- Disable: prevent munitions, IEDs and bulk agent being used as intended either temporarily or permanently
- Destroy: permanently and irreversibly destroy munitions, IEDs and bulk agents

In the first phase, proposals were focused on single component parts. Seven organisations were funded at a value of almost £700k.

We are now looking for a system solution either by collaboration with other partners or by integration into existing technologies. More details can be found in the [competition document](#).

Proposals for this phase of the competition must be submitted to DASA by 1700 GMT (1200 EST) on 6 January 2020.

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## [Lake of Stars festival in Malawi: travel advice](#)



Venue for this year's LoS Festival: Kachere Kastle

If you're heading to the Lake of Stars festival between 27 – 29 September in northern Malawi (Kachere Kastle), check out the following information and advice page. The vast majority of British tourists don't encounter any problems but it's best to be aware of a few things before you go.

### **Before you go**

- Remember to take out travel insurance. It could save you a lot of money if you get into difficulties. Make sure you carry the emergency contact number and policy number with you and leave a copy of your policy with someone at home
- Take 2 photocopies of your passport. Leave one at home and take the other with you
- Tell family or friends where you'll be staying
- Fill in the last page of your passport with your emergency contacts

## At the festival

- Keep your valuables locked in a safe place (such as a hotel safe or locker on the festival site) and carry as few valuables as possible
- Carry a photocopy of your passport around with you
- Keep some spare cash separate from the rest
- Keep your cash and mobile in a zipped pocket
- Avoid walking home on your own. Take care on public transport and don't be distracted.
- If you plan to drive to the festival please ensure you lock car doors and keep windows closed. Armed carjacking is a risk, especially for drivers of four-by-four vehicles. Don't offer lifts to strangers and look out for obstructions in the road ahead
- Parking is available and is located approximately 1km away from the venue. We believe shuttle buses will be available. Vehicles and contents are left entirely at the owner's risk. Please plan accordingly and do not leave any valuables in your vehicle.
- Since elections in May 2019, Malawi has seen widespread demonstrations, which have on occasion turned violent; you should avoid large crowds or demonstrations and monitor our travel advice and local media for updates
- Laws and customs can be different in other countries. Penalties for drug possession can be severe. If you need help
- The festival should have an information point you can go to for help and advice and to look for lost property
- In an emergency, call 997 (Police), 998 (Ambulance) and 999 (Fire Brigade)
- If your passport has been lost, stolen or damaged and you can't get a new or replacement passport in time for travel, you can get an Emergency Travel Document (ETD) to get you home. You'll need to get a police report, if lost or stolen, and fill in an online application form, pay £100 online and go to the British High Commission to collect the Emergency Travel Document. If the person needing the emergency travel document is under 16, a parent or guardian should apply on their behalf.

Published 27 September 2019

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[Foreign Secretary statement ahead of Afghanistan election](#)



The UK is urging all groups in Afghanistan to work together for a credible and transparent election, to follow due process, and respect the rule of law and the independence of the electoral authorities.

The Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The UK strongly supports Afghanistan's democratic process and urges all groups to follow due process for a credible and transparent election.

I hope that we see a peaceful election and I urge all parties to stop violence against civilians.

Everyone must be able to exercise the right to participate in the process free from intimidation.

## **Further information**

Published 27 September 2019