

UK Statement to the 63rd International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference

Madam President,

Congratulations on your appointment as President of this Conference. It is my great pleasure to lead the UK's delegation this year, and to continue the close partnership between the UK Government and the IAEA.

It is with sadness that I reflect on the passing of former Director General Amano. A committed public servant and friend of the United Kingdom, he led the Agency through significant challenges and leaves a positive legacy for global peace, security and development.

Madam President,

The UK Government is committed to tackling the global challenge of climate change. We recently became the first major economy to set a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

We believe nuclear energy will play a key role in achieving this, so our landmark Nuclear Sector Deal is bringing industry and Government together to ensure the nuclear sector thrives in the UK.

As work progresses on our new nuclear power plant at Hinkley Point C, we are exploring innovative financing models for new build projects and ways to reduce the costs of decommissioning. We are also exploring the potential of small and advanced modular reactors.

At the same time, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will develop new talent and a diverse workforce for the UK.

Mindful of our responsibilities to future generations, we have also launched consent-based processes to identify a location for a Geological Disposal Facility for our higher activity radioactive waste.

Madam President,

Next year's 50th anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is an important moment to emphasise the importance of its three Pillars, and celebrate the Agency's support for its peaceful uses and non-proliferation aspects.

The UK is among the biggest supporters of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme for sustainable development. I am proud to pledge our 2020 contribution of €3.8m to the TC Fund today. I urge all Member States to join us in pledging and paying their full share.

It is right that more countries benefit from peaceful nuclear technologies.

But this brings responsibilities to protect people and maintain public acceptance of nuclear energy.

If something goes wrong, whether accidental or deliberate, all States must meet their obligations to openness and transparency with their neighbours.

We strongly support the IAEA's work to help Member States implement robust nuclear safety and security measures. To ensure our own regulations meet the highest standards, the UK will host an Integrated Regulatory Review Service mission next month. We encourage others to use IAEA advisory services.

Madam President,

The application of IAEA safeguards is indispensable for global peace and security. All States should ratify an Additional Protocol, the gold standard for safeguards agreements. The UK's own new safeguards arrangements are ready and will ensure we continue to meet our obligations once EURATOM arrangements no longer apply to the UK.

However, some States continue to challenge the global non-proliferation system.

The UK calls on Iran to reverse its suspension of stockpile and enrichment limits and comply with its obligations under the JCPOA. We welcome the Agency's monitoring of Iranian compliance with the deal, and we remain committed to its full implementation.

North Korea's recent missile launches and violations of UN resolutions are of great concern. We are clear that sanctions must remain in place until North Korea takes concrete steps towards denuclearisation. Finally, Syria has not met its safeguards obligations since 2011. This issue must remain on the Board's agenda until Syria returns to full compliance with its obligations.

Madam President,

The UK will continue to give the Secretariat, and the future Director General, our full support in fulfilling the Agency's unique and important role.

Thank you.

Habitats improved at RSPB reserve during flood scheme works

The Environment Agency has begun work to improve existing habitat and to create new areas to increase the amount of good habitat available for ground nesting breeding birds and feeding waders at RSPB Sandwell Valley. The work

is part of the Perry Barr and Witton flood scheme.

The work has been designed in partnership with the RSPB who manage the site and who have been monitoring the wildlife using the area. It includes increasing the amount of island edge in the lake by creating areas of shallow water and gradually sloping banks. An area of reedbed along the lake edge is being formed to add further habitat interest for the local wildlife.

The Sandwell Valley work is being done as part of the Perry Barr and Witton flood risk management scheme to deliver better protection to 1,379 properties. The scheme may lead to more frequent fluctuations in lake water levels. To compensate for the disturbance to wildlife the works should provide greater available habitat for the wildlife.

Work at RSPB Sandwell Valley is expected to be complete by the end of this week. The work is being complemented by habitat creation and restoration work elsewhere across the construction site and in adjacent areas. This includes woodland and hedgerow creation and management, grassland management and wetland habitat creation. Species that will benefit from the work include lapwing, little ringed plover and snipe.

Kathryn Edwards, Senior Environmental Project Manager, at the Environment Agency said:

We're really pleased to be working with the RSPB on this project and hope it will result in many more birds nesting at, and visiting, the site.

[New UK aid support to protect 200 million people from debilitating diseases](#)

- A new UK aid programme will fight diseases in 25 of the world's poorest countries
- Support will target five Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) which cause disability and death
- Baroness Sugg announced the programme at a speech at the Neglected Tropical Disease NGO Network Conference in Liverpool

A new UK aid package will help protect 200 million people worldwide from debilitating diseases, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Baroness Sugg has announced today.

Speaking at the Neglected Tropical Disease NGO Network Conference in

Liverpool, Baroness Sugg announced that the £220 million will tackle five of the world's worst Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), which can cause disability, death and disfigurement and trap victims in a cycle of poverty. These are lymphatic filariasis (also known as elephantiasis); onchocerciasis; schistosomiasis; visceral leishmaniasis and trachoma.

These diseases affect over a billion people worldwide, stopping adults from working and children from going to school, and are estimated to cost developing economies billions of pounds every year in lost productivity.

Today's Department for International Development (DFID) package will deliver 600 million treatments to prevent NTDs as a vital step towards their elimination. It will aim to eliminate visceral leishmaniasis from Asia by 2022. The programme will also help national governments to tackle these diseases themselves in future.

International Development Minister Baroness Sugg said:

These debilitating – but preventable – diseases stop sufferers from working, studying and leading prosperous, healthy lives.

This new UK aid support will stop hundreds of millions of people suffering unnecessarily from treatable conditions. It shows how the UK is helping to lead the way in tackling deadly global diseases more generally, including polio and malaria.

Last year, UK aid provided treatment or care to over 140 million people suffering from Neglected Tropical Diseases.

Sightsavers' Director of Neglected Tropical Diseases Simon Bush said:

More than a billion people are at risk of neglected tropical diseases – a group of conditions which are completely preventable and easy to treat, yet cause agony, disability and often trap people in a cycle of poverty.

Thanks to DFID's new flagship programme announced today we will be able to treat, control and even eliminate more of them than we have ever before. It is an unprecedented programme working on a scale and scope I have never seen, tackling five diseases in 25 countries and making a long-lasting impact on global health.

Crown Agents' Chief Executive Officer, Fergus Drake said:

We are delighted to have the opportunity to take forward the UK Department for International Development's flagship health programme to accelerate the control and elimination of neglected tropical diseases across southern and eastern Africa, and south

Asia.

The programme is committed to leaving no one behind and will help to transform the lives of millions of individuals suffering from these debilitating diseases – enabling them to participate in economic and domestic activities once more.

In the long term the programme will contribute to improving health systems and building greater capacity in governments for sustainable response to these diseases.

Notes to editors

- Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) are a significant cause of poverty, causing suffers to lose their livelihoods and face stigma.
- In 2017, the UK announced new funding of £360 million over five years to control and eliminate NTDs. The £220 million funding announced today is an allocation from DFID's flagship NTD programme, which comes from this £360 million support.
- Sightsavers and Crown Agents will implement the programme working with partners including the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.
- The programme will also provide £6.5 million of funding to the World Health Organisation to tackle NTDs.

Case Study – the stigma of NTDs

Muhammed Abubakar, a tailor from the Kebbi region of Nigeria, has lived with lymphedema for over 10 years. The parasitic disease, spread by mosquito bite, caused his legs and feet to swell to more than double their normal size. It became so painful he found it difficult to push the foot peddle on his sewing machine.

Muhammed faced much stigma and he lost customers, who feared they could catch his condition if he handled their clothes.

The tailor visited hospitals and traditional doctors but received no diagnosis or help until 2017 when he was treated under a UK Aid Match funded programme tackling lymphatic filariasis. He was given a basic care package containing antibacterial and antifungal cream, soap, a washing bowl and a towel, and taught how to treat it himself.

In just four weeks the swelling began to subside. Muhammed's feet were once around 22 cm in circumference, but have now returned to a more normal size of 13 cm. He is able to spend more time doing his job and his income has gone up. He can also socialise and play football again.

UN Human Rights Council 42: Interactive Dialogue with the Fact- finding Mission on Myanmar

The UK thanks the Fact Finding Mission for its continued commitment to documenting the appalling events that have taken place in Myanmar since 2017, in particular targeting the Rohingya Muslims.

The Mission's reports paint a devastating picture of systematic human rights violations and a culture of consistent impunity in Myanmar. They have also shown how this is reinforced by economic structures that exist to protect and enrich those responsible.

From human rights violations in Rakhine, Shan and Kachin States; to the insidious nature of the Tatmadaw's economic influence; or the horrific sexual violence perpetrated by the security forces; the need for genuine accountability has never been clearer. The Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar has our full support as it becomes operational, and we encourage Myanmar to cooperate fully with its mandate.

Accountability for the atrocities documented by the Fact Finding Mission is crucial. A credible domestic process would be the most effective route to justice and reconciliation. We call on the Independent Commission of Enquiry to demonstrate its independence and credibility and we await its report. However, if domestic processes are not credible then we must look at all other options.

We believe that the situation in Myanmar continues to warrant the attention of the international community, both in the Human Rights Council and in the Security Council.

Mr. President, what can the Investigative Mechanism learn from the Fact Finding Mission to ensure it is as effective as possible?

Take a game-changing idea to market: apply for an innovation loan



Thang Vo-Ta, CEO & co-founder, and Ewa Radziwon, Product development lead, of Callaly. The company received an innovation loan to help commercialise their feminine hygiene product.

Smaller companies often struggle to convert their game-changing ideas into commercially available products and services because of the costs of scaling up production and the difficulty in gaining finance.

Innovate UK as part of UK Research and Innovation is offering up to £10 million in loans to help small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) to commercialise innovative products or services.

Ideas can come from any area of technology or the economy and must lead to sustainable business growth.

The scheme aims to provide businesses with finance that is affordable and flexible and that supports projects in the late stage of development.

Businesses must have developed a game-changing idea

The aim of the competition for innovation loans is to help businesses to overcome the barriers to their cutting-edge ideas becoming sustainable commercial products. Businesses need to show they could not get suitable finance from other sources.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- a clear game-changing and/or disruptive idea
- a strong and deliverable business plan
- the necessary skills and experience to run and complete the project successfully and on time
- awareness of all the main risks the project will face
- sound, practical financial plans and timelines that represent good value for money
- a clear plan to deliver growth through commercialisation

Competition information

- the competition opens on 23 September 2019, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 27 November 2019

- only SMEs can apply
- loans of between £100,000 and £1 million are available
- projects can last up to 5 years and the loan can be repaid over up to 10 years

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