

## PM statement at G7: 26 August 2019

I'd like to thank President Macron for an incredibly stylish and highly effective Summit that he's just hosted for us here in Biarritz.

Every conversation that I've had with my fellow leaders, I've been struck by their enthusiasm to expand and strengthen their relations with our country – whether that's on trade or security or defence, science and indeed the growing opportunities we've had to collaborate in space and technology.

We've also spoken in Biarritz about the biggest global challenges confronting us all today and these are things that I think very much matter to the people in the UK.

We've been talking about biodiversity. We've got to stop the tragic loss of habitats and species that is happening around the world. We can't just sit back as animals and plants are wiped off the face of the planet.

The world's animal populations have declined by about 60% in the last fifty years – about a million species are now facing extinction.

And we've seen in the Amazon rainforest the tragic increase in fires which are made more likely by deforestation. And that's why today I've announced £10 million in new funding to protect and restore the rainforest in Brazil.

With one million birds and 100,000 mammals losing their lives every year from eating or getting tangled in ocean plastic – we've got to do much more to protect the oceans, and today I've announced £7 million for the Blue Belt programme to extend our work to protect the vital marine ecosystems in conservation areas in overseas territories.

And don't forget Britain has the fifth biggest marine estate in the world.

If we don't act now our children and our grandchildren will never know a world with the Great Barrier Reef, or the Sumatran Tiger or the Black Rhino.

And so next year at the biodiversity COP – the Summit in China – the so called aichi targets must, in our view, be replaced with new, more ambitious targets to help us get back the biodiversity that this planet is losing, and has lost.

And I'm pleased that the G7 Summit today in Biarritz has accepted those UK ideas, those proposals for biodiversity targets, for humanity to set targets to stop the reduction of habitats and species. And obviously we are going to follow up on that at the COP Summit in the UK if we're lucky enough to get that and I very much believe that we will.

There's one issue underpinning all that which I believe holds the key to tackling so many global problems and that is the vital importance of educating girls and I'm very pleased that here at the G7 people, everybody, every delegation has supported the UK's campaign to give every girl in the

world 12 years of quality education.

Today I announced funding to give 600,000 children in the world's most dangerous countries, where girls are twice as likely as boys to be out of school, the opportunity to go to school for the first time.

We discussed Iran, and we are all agreed that Iran should never under any circumstances be allowed to get a nuclear weapon. And there is clearly an opportunity for Iran to now come back into compliance with a nuclear deal – the JCPOA – and to resume dialogue as well as to cease its disruptive behaviour in the region.

We expressed, collectively, deep concern about what is happening in Hong Kong, and the G7 nations all want to support a stable and a prosperous Hong Kong. And we remain collectively committed to the one country two systems framework.

And I was pleased that was reflected in the conclusions of the Summit, which was as I say very productive indeed.

People can quarrel with Summits and with world leaders coming together in this way for discussions about the wide ranging issues we have had – but I really think that if the leaders who have been gathered together in Biarritz over the last couple of days really follow through on these discussions, and really mean what they say in the conclusions, I think it will make a real difference to the issues that the people in our country care very deeply about.

So I thank you very much for sticking with it. I know it's been a long old Summit, but I'd like to take your questions now.

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## **Britannia Protects the Waves: £7m extra funding to protect UK marine life**

Millions of square kilometres of ocean around the world will be cleaner and more sustainable thanks to the UK's commitment to extend its Blue Belt scheme, [announced by Prime Minister Boris Johnson at the G7 today](#).

The additional £7 million will mean our world-leading protection of Marine Protected Areas can continue and expand, supporting the protection of key species such as turtles, whales, fish, seabirds and wider marine life.

Addressing world leaders at the G7 the Prime Minister said the next year would be vital for the future of our planet, and called for the Aichi targets

to be replaced with new, more ambitious ones at the Biodiversity COP in China next year.

Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said:

The UK is the first major economy to legislate for net zero CO2 emissions and we are leading the way on protecting the world's ocean for future generations.

As we leave the EU and become an independent coastal nation, the UK will continue to show global leadership on issues of common interest.

Charles Clover, Executive Director at Blue Marine Foundation, said:

These Blue Belt sites are like the rainforests of the ocean – where rare sharks, turtles, corals and large fish are still abundant.

We are therefore delighted to hear that, in addition to fully implementing and continuing to fund the Blue Belt commitments made in 2016, the Prime Minister has committed to offering this world leading programme to the other UK Overseas Territories.

Jonathan Hall, Head of UK Overseas Territories at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said:

We're delighted that new funding will be made available to complete the world-leading Blue Belt programme and offer it to other Territories which wish to participate.

This can mean more much-needed protection for rare turtles and globally important seabirds, fragile coral reefs and mysterious deep-sea habitats, and will benefit the many Territory communities which depend so heavily on a healthy marine environment.

It comes the same week as the Ascension Island Council has committed to making their waters an Atlantic 'Galapagos' by designating all 445,000 km<sup>2</sup> of their waters a large-scale Marine Protected Area. This will support the protection of key species such as green turtles, endemic fish species, important seabirds and marine life.

This Government will also continue to build on the Spring Statement commitment to ensure on-going support to Territories within the Blue Belt programme to have relevant protection, monitoring and enforcement strategies in place

The extension of the Blue Belt scheme follows a series of UK Government initiatives on ocean management, such as Maritime 2050, the Clean Maritime

Plan and wider 25 year Environment Plan.

## Notes to Editors

- Since its launch in 2016, the Government's Blue Belt initiative has enabled the UK and the UK Overseas Territories to protect over half of British waters within designated Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). This is set to rise to almost two-thirds by next year, making a significant contribution to the health of the global ocean.
- Earlier in the year, the Blue Belt programme collaborated with the Pew Trust, the Zoological Society of London and others to send a team of researchers to Henderson Island, a remote island in the Pacific, to study the island's troubling plastic pollution and its impact on the marine environment.
- Through the £26.5 million Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME) programme the Government is supporting 17 Small Island Developing States (SIDS) across the Caribbean and Pacific to develop and grow sustainable marine economies which create jobs, drive national economic growth and reduce poverty while safeguarding healthy seas and ecosystems. In partnership with the SIDS' governments, the programme will help to develop and implement national Maritime Economy Plans to ensure the programme leaves a lasting legacy.
- On the global stage, the UK is also pushing for the conclusion of an ambitious new high seas biodiversity agreement by 2020 to improve the conservation and sustainable use of the high seas and support the designation of Marine Protected Areas across 30% of the ocean.

## Further information

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# [Transitioning to a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future in Sudan](#)

Well, thank you, Madam President, and thank you to our briefers as well.

Madam President, this is a very positive moment and therefore, I hope a very positive meeting of this Council. The people of Sudan have brought about unprecedented change through their demands for a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future. And I congratulate, of course, not only the people of Sudan, but also the African Union and the government of Ethiopia for their mediation efforts. The Council has welcomed those recent events in a press statement. I just reiterate today the United Kingdom's support for the Sovereign Council and its appointment of Dr. Abdallah Hamdok as Prime Minister.

The 17th of August agreement contains a number of important commitments: a pledge to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and a commitment to accountability and justice, including a commitment to establish a national independent committee to investigate the violent acts committed on the 3rd of June and other incidents of human rights violations and abuses. We welcome very much these commitments made by Sudan and encourage all those with a stake in Sudan's future to ensure the timely and full implementation of the agreement in order to make the demands of the Sudanese people a reality. The United Kingdom will, of course, support the new prime minister, the new government, as as best that we can.

Madam President, for decades, Sudan has been plagued by internal conflict. But with the beginning of a new chapter in Sudan's history, we – and more importantly, the people of Darfur – can begin to feel a sense of hope and optimism. The new government has committed to achieve a fair, comprehensive and sustainable peace in Sudan and prioritize the peace process, which we very much welcome. We call on all sides but in particular the armed movements to engage constructively, immediately and without preconditions in negotiations to finally deliver a peaceful solution to the conflict in Darfur.

Remaining on Dafur for a moment, Madam President, I would just note that the United Kingdom remains one of the largest humanitarian donors; over \$100 million were given by the United Kingdom last year for humanitarian assistance. And there have been many humanitarian implications of the conflict in Darfur. So as the new government works to deliver peace, may I also request them to take immediate steps to help address the humanitarian situation? In particular, one very concrete step that could be taken would be to ensure full access for those seeking to provide support through the removal of bureaucratic impediments imposed by the previous government on humanitarian access. I hope that's something that Sudan will be able to move quickly on.

Madam President, the uncertainty in Sudan during the mandate renewal led, as we all know, to a pause in the transition from peacekeeping to peace building. When this Council adopted Resolution 2479, I said then that there needed to be meaningful progress on a number of fronts before the transition could resume. Now, the transition to a civilian-led government has clearly been agreed and it is extremely welcome. We believe that there is a legitimate partner for the United Nations and the African Union to engage with on UNAMID's drawdown and that transition to peacebuilding.

And I'd like to thank Jean-Pierre Lacroix for some of his updates on some of the wider issues. But he talked of some reassurances given. I'd just like to ask Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, whether at this stage the rapid support forces have withdrawn from the former UNAMID team site so they can be used for civilian purposes? Or whether this is instead something that is under discussion? It would be helpful to know what the status of those former team sites are.

Madam President, in addition to genuine, sustained commitment from the new government and the armed movements, clearly, continued international efforts

will be required in support of the new government in tackling the underlying causes of the conflict. May I say here, it's good to hear about the joint visit here proposed by Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Commissioner Chergui and indeed the suggestion that there might be further spotlight on this issue during High Level Week.

So we will need to see, for example, a need for political support to the peace process, including implementation and monitoring of future peace agreements, clearly continued human rights monitoring, will be required. Capacity building will be required and there will be a need for humanitarian development support, particularly for Darfur's almost 2 million internally displaced persons. This support may be best provided through a continued UN/AU presence in Darfur after UNAMID's closure. In this regard, we look forward to the AU and the UN providing the Council with options for a follow-on mechanism to UNAMID in the upcoming special report at the end of September. These options should be comprehensive and build on the opportunity that this moment in Sudan's history represents.

Let me conclude, Madam President, by again welcoming the positive developments underway in Sudan, commending again the people of Sudan for the incredible transformation that they have undertaken, and to say that after decades of conflict, poor governance, human rights abuses and economic mismanagement, the new government has not only a momentous opportunity, but a momentous task ahead of them. And the United Kingdom stands ready to work with the new government, with the people of Sudan, as they seek that transition to a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future.

Thank you, Madam President.

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## [Head of British Diplomatic Service travels to Honduras](#)

This is the first visit to Honduras by the Head of the British Diplomatic Service and he will focus on strengthening UK ties with Honduras, including our shared commitment to improving economic development, good governance and protection of human rights.

Whilst in Tegucigalpa, PUS McDonald will meet representatives of the Government, the regional development bank CABEI, civil society and private sector. He will also greet young Hondurans who have studied in Britain under the UK government global scholarship programme, Chevening.

In a meeting with Government representatives, the Under Secretary will advocate for increased trade between the two countries, and press for urgent ratification by Congress of the recently signed Association Agreement between the UK and Central America.

This agreement replicates the existing European Union-Central America Association Agreement, and will ensure continuity in the trading relationship between the UK and Central America when the UK ceases to be a member of the EU.

The Permanent Under Secretary and the British Ambassador to Honduras, Tom Carter, will host a reception for representatives from government, the business community, civil society and the diplomatic corps.

Undersecretary McDonald will then travel to Guatemala, as part of a regional tour that will have taken him to six Central American countries.

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## **Head of British Diplomatic Service travels to Guatemala**

This will be the first visit to Guatemala by the Head of the British Diplomatic Service and is part of a regional tour (including Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Belize).

His visit will focus on strengthening UK ties with Guatemala as well as discussing a wide range of international issues, such as free trade, regional stability and climate change, amongst others.

While in Guatemala, he will meet representatives of the Government, recently elected officials, civil society and the private sector. He will also have chance to meet young Guatemalans who studied in the UK under the British Government's global scholarship programme, Chevening.

The PUS will also give an update on the UK's departure from the EU and progress on the ratification of the recently signed UK – Central America Association Agreement. This replicates the existing European Union – Central America Association Agreement, and will ensure continuity of the trading relationship between the UK and Central America when the UK ceases to be a member of the EU.