

UK reveals Royal Navy seizure of smuggled Iranian missiles

In early 2022, whilst on routine maritime security operations, Royal Navy ship [HMS Montrose](#) seized Iranian weapons from speedboats being operated by smugglers in international waters south of Iran. The weapons seized included surface-to-air-missiles and engines for land attack cruise missiles, in contravention of UN Security Council resolution 2216 (2015).

This is the first time a British Naval warship has interdicted a vessel carrying such sophisticated weapons from Iran.

The seizures, which occurred on 28th January and 25th February 2022, took place in the early hours of the morning. HMS Montrose's [Wildcat helicopter](#), equipped with state of the art radar systems, was scanning for vessels smuggling illicit goods. The helicopter crew spotted small vessels moving at speed away from the Iranian coast.

During the February interdiction, United States Navy destroyer USS Gridley supported efforts by deploying a Seahawk helicopter to provide critical overwatch during the operation. On both occasions, the Wildcat helicopter pursued the vessels and reported back to HMS Montrose that they could see suspicious cargo on deck.

A team of Royal Marines approached the vessels on two Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boats before securing and searching the vessel. Dozens of packages containing advanced weaponry were discovered, confiscated and brought back to HMS Montrose.

Minister for the Armed Forces James Heapey said:

The UK is committed to upholding international law, from standing up to aggression in Europe to interdicting illegal shipments of weaponry that perpetuates instability in the Middle East. The UK will continue to work in support of an enduring peace in Yemen and is committed to international maritime security so that commercial shipping can transit safely without threat of disruption.

The seized packages were returned to the UK for technical analysis which revealed that the shipment contained multiple rocket engines for the Iranian produced 351 land attack cruise missile and a batch of 358 surface-to-air missiles.

The 351 is a cruise missile with a range of 1,000km. It is regularly used by the Houthis to strike targets in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and was also the type of weapon used to attack Abu Dhabi on 17th January 2022, which killed three civilians.

On Friday 24 June, the Ministry of Defence hosted the Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2140 (2014), which concerns the conflict in Yemen. The panel inspected the seized weapons and received a technical brief by the UK's Defence Intelligence analysts.

Commanding Officer of HMS Montrose, Commander Claire Thompson, said:

These interdictions demonstrate the professionalism and commitment of the Royal Navy to promoting stability in this region. I am extremely proud of my crew – the Royal Navy sailors, aircrew and Royal Marines involved in these endeavours and the significant positive impact they are having in maintaining the international rules-based order at sea.

The UK retains a permanent presence in the Middle East, with HMS Montrose having been deployed to the region since early 2019, actively supporting multi-national maritime security operations and protecting the interests of the United Kingdom and its allies. The ship operates under the control and direction of the [UK Maritime Component Command](#) (UKMCC), based in Bahrain.

In the wider Gulf, HMS Montrose regularly works alongside international partners as part of the 38-nation coalition Combined Maritime Forces (CMF). CMF is the world's largest multinational maritime partnership, which exists to counter illicit non-state actors. HMS Montrose, a Type 23 frigate, has taken part in numerous successful operations to seize illicit drugs in the Gulf of Oman, most recently in January when [£15 million worth of heroin, methamphetamine, hashish and marijuana were seized](#).

[Heylo Housing Registered Provider](#) [Limited grading under review](#)

Press release

Providers being investigated for an issue regarding their compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard are added to the regulator's GUR list.



The Regulator of Social Housing reports that Heylo Housing Registered Provider Limited has been placed on its gradings under review list today (7 July 2022).

The regulator is currently investigating a matter which may impact on the provider's compliance with the governance element of the Governance and Financial Viability Standard. Once completed, the outcome of the investigation will be confirmed in a regulatory judgement.

The regulator notifies that a provider's grading is under review when it is being investigated in relation to an issue which may result in it receiving a non-compliant grade (G3 or G4 for governance, or V3 or V4 for viability).

The regulator's [gradings under review list](#) is available on its website.

For press office contact details, see our [Media enquiries page](#).

For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

Notes to editors

1. The GUR lists providers where we are investigating a matter that might result in them being assessed as non-compliant in relation to the regulator's Governance and Financial Viability Standard.
2. The [regulatory standards](#) can be found on the RSH website.
3. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.

UNICEF and British Embassy Asuncion encourage young people's commitment to the environment

Five groups of students from Asuncion, San Lorenzo, Fernando de la Mora, Ciudad del Este and San Pedro participated in a workshop where, with the help of mentors, they refined the projects they had previously developed. The workshop took place on the weekend of 25 June, 2022.

A jury composed of Antonieta Rojas de Arias and Alberto Yanovsky, members of the Scientific Society of Paraguay, evaluated and selected the two best proposals. These will receive UNICEF support for implementation. Rojas commented:

It has been really great because all the groups show a deep commitment to all the processes and to the conservation of biodiversity and the relationship between the community and the environment.

Yonovsky added:

The proposals are motivating. You come away feeling renewed because you see the energy young people have .

One of the selected projects proposes the creation of urban gardens in Luque to treat the grey water produced in schools, and at the same time produce organic food in a sustainable way. The other proposes the installation of rubbish bins and a compost bin to manage waste from three educational institutions in Guayaibi, department of San Pedro.

In the words of UNICEF Deputy Representative Viviana Limpias:

Paraguay is a country where there are many opportunities to do many things, but we as an organization cannot do it if it is not through you, through your creativity, through your strength.

We want to continue strengthening proposals like these and support you in your work and enthusiasm.

British Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission, John Davie said:

I was very surprised by the depth of knowledge the young people have on the issue of climate change.

The Youth Challenge aims to develop skills for employability and social impact, as well as to build confidence and empower youth. It is part of the "Generation Unlimited" global partnership, which aims to ensure that by 2030 all adolescents and young people have access to education, learning, training or employment to build a better future.

Biggest renewables auction accelerates move away from fossil fuels

- Biggest ever round of government's flagship renewables auction scheme delivers record capacity of almost 11GW of clean energy, almost double the capacity achieved in the previous round
- enough to power around 12 million British homes with clean, affordable, homegrown energy, helping to reduce our exposure to volatile global prices
- almost 7GW of capacity from new offshore wind projects will increase the country's overall capacity built and under construction by 35%

A record amount of renewable energy has today (7 July 2022) been secured through the biggest ever round of the UK government's flagship auction scheme.

The fourth round of the Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme has been the most successful ever, securing almost 11GW across a range of clean technologies, including offshore wind, solar, onshore wind, and – for the first time ever – floating offshore wind and tidal stream – helping to boost British energy security and independence with cleaner, more affordable and diverse energy created in the UK.

CfDs give certainty to project developers to invest in new renewable energy infrastructure by protecting them from volatile wholesale prices. A unique benefit of the CfD scheme is that when wholesale electricity prices are high, as they have been in recent months, generators pay money back into the scheme to reduce the net costs of the scheme to consumers.

The greatest capacity – almost 7GW – has been secured from new offshore wind projects around the coastline of Great Britain, enough to increase the country's overall capacity built and under construction by 35% and take a significant step towards meeting the government's 50GW of offshore wind ambition by 2030.

The competitive nature of the scheme has continued to place downward pressure

on prices – the per unit (MWh) price of offshore wind secured in this round is almost 70% less than that secured in the first allocation round, in 2015.

Onshore wind and solar energy were both included in a CfD auction for the first time since 2015. Onshore wind secured almost 0.9GW of new capacity, clearing at a per unit price that was more than 45% lower than in the first CfD round in 2015, while solar secured more than 2.2GW.

The fourth round also saw developing technologies tidal stream and floating offshore wind projects successful for the first time. Tidal stream returned a capacity of 41MW and floating offshore wind returned 32MW.

Overall, 93 projects with existing planning permission across England, Scotland and Wales have won contracts through the competitive auction process, which is more than in all 3 previous rounds combined.

This helps solidify the UK's role as a world-leader in renewable electricity, driving investment in new, future-proof industries, creating skilled jobs and helping reduce emissions across the country. The results also represent significant progress towards achieving ambitions set out in the British Energy Security Strategy, including for the offshore wind sector alone to support around 90,000 high-skilled jobs across Great Britain by the end of the decade.

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Eye-watering gas prices are hitting consumers across Europe. The more cheap, clean power we generate within our own borders, the better protected we will be from volatile gas prices that are pushing up bills.

Thanks to today's record renewable energy auction, we have secured almost 11GW of clean, home-grown electricity – which would provide as much power as around 6 gas fired power stations.

These energy projects already have planning permission, now they have a funding contract in place. We're going to these projects built as soon as possible to better protect millions of British families from rising costs.

As well as securing a record level of clean electricity generation capacity, the fourth CfD round has delivered energy from a greater number of renewable technologies than ever before, helping to ensure a more secure, more resilient energy system.

It is a significant step towards securing a future where Great Britain is powered by cheaper, reliable, homegrown energy, delivering on ambitions laid out in the British Energy Security Strategy. An increase in renewables will drastically reduce the country's exposure to the volatile global fossil fuel prices that are pushing up energy bills for millions of households.

Energy Minister Greg Hands said:

This fourth round shows the government's Contracts for Difference scheme continues to be a roaring success.

Not only has it secured a record capacity of clean electricity, it ensures the UK will have a future powered by a resilient and diverse supply of homegrown energy by bringing forward a greater range of renewable technologies than ever before.

The government's [British Energy Security Strategy](#) set out how Great Britain will accelerate the deployment of renewable technologies, with an ambition to see 95% of electricity being low carbon by 2030. The strategy also set out an increased ambition for the number of clean jobs in the UK by supporting 90,000 in offshore wind by 2030.

RenewableUK Deputy Chief Executive Melanie Onn said:

Today's record-breaking auction results show that there is a way to replace unaffordable gas with low-cost clean power generated by a wide range of renewable technologies led by wind, both offshore and onshore. Thanks to the rapid construction times of new onshore wind and solar sites, billpayers will start to feel the benefits of today's auction next year.

The auction also showed that the UK is maintaining its position as a world-leader in innovative renewable energy technologies like tidal stream and floating wind, which will both play an increasingly significant role in our transition to clean power to meet our net zero goal.

Working closely with government, we need to make this country the most attractive place to invest in. This is particularly important if we want to develop our supply chain in new technologies like floating wind, tidal stream and green hydrogen, in which we can lead the global market and seize the export opportunities this offers.

- The Contracts for Difference fourth allocation round ran between December 2021 and July 2022
- [successful energy projects that have received contracts through the competitive auction process in the fourth allocation round](#)
- Contracts for Difference are 15-year private law contracts between renewable electricity generators and the Low Carbon Contracts Company (LCCC), a government-owned company that manages CfDs at arm's length from government
- contracts are awarded in a series of competitive auctions, known as allocation rounds, which have been run approximately every 2 years but will be held annually from March 2023. In the auction process, the

lowest price bids within each pot and / or ringfence are successful, which drives efficiency and cost reduction

- CfDs give greater certainty and stability of revenues to electricity generators by reducing their exposure to volatile wholesale prices, while protecting consumers from paying for higher costs when electricity prices are high
- the scheme has delivered substantial new investment and helped deliver significant reductions in the costs of capital for some renewable technologies
- the CfD fourth round had budget funding of £295 million per year (2011-2012 prices)
- this saw £210 million allocated to the pot supporting offshore wind projects, with £10 million for established technologies and £75 million for less-established technologies, including ringfenced funding of £24 million for floating offshore wind projects and £20 million for tidal stream projects
- monetary support (pot budget) estimates, including the £295 million total figure and split across the 3 pots, are presented in 2011-2012 prices in line with the Control for Low Carbon Levies. These figures are an estimate of annual support in the most expensive year in the first 4 years following deployment. Actual annual figures will vary over the lifetime of the contract depending on future wholesale electricity prices, and outcomes of the competitive auction process
- the homes powered estimate reflects the equivalent number of homes that could be powered based on an estimate of the annual generation from the capacity procured in AR4. It is not possible to continuously power a home through intermittent renewables – this capacity will work alongside the rest of the electricity system to power homes and businesses. The estimate is calculated using household consumption estimates sourced from the published National Energy Efficiency Data, and technology specific load factors published in the CfD Allocation Round 4 Standard Terms Notice. The actual generation will vary based on site specific factors. The same estimated load factors are used in the comparison of AR4 generation with Hinkley Point C. For Hinkley Point C the load factor published in the BEIS Electricity Generation Costs report is used

Africa Debate 2022: Minister Ford's Speech

Good morning everyone, it's absolutely wonderful to be here, thank you very much to the Invest Africa team for inviting me to come along to speak.

I know that this morning my colleague Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Secretary of State for International Trade, gave an overview of the Government's work to strengthen economies and spread economic opportunity across Africa.

She gave some very encouraging examples of how British and African businesses are making the most of trade and investment opportunities.

My focus as the Minister for Africa is somewhat broader. It takes in 5 different priorities all of which – ultimately – are supporting building a more resilient continent.

One of those priorities is of course to strengthen our economic partnerships; to help unlock opportunity, spread prosperity and thus transform lives.

But the other four are each a foundation that helps to support that prosperity long into the future.

First, there's freedom. We believe that where people are free to choose who makes the laws that govern them, countries are more likely to live in peace; and with peace comes prosperity.

Also, good governance gives investors the transparency and stability they need in order to be able to invest in good faith.

Secondly, there's climate change. Climate change is the greatest ever threat to global prosperity and many African nations are on the front line. So we are working to tackle climate change, protect nature, build more sustainable economies.

And thirdly, because none of us can thrive surrounded by insecurity, we work with countries to try to counter direct threats to them, as well as to threats to the UK and to our interests.

Our fourth priority is to educate, empower and end violence against women and girls. Because no economy will ever reach its potential until it deploys the talents of all of its people.

And the overarching aim of all this work is to try to help, build the resilience of countries and to help them have a much more durable prosperity.

For far too long, African countries have endured the fallout from global forces outside their control.

Take back over a decade ago, the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, Africa suffered contagion from what happened in the global financial markets. And the African businesses and African governments were left with holes in their balance sheets from plummeting commodity prices.

Then take climate change. Many vulnerable communities are finding life increasingly untenable as a consequence of the greenhouse gases that are emitted elsewhere in the world.

And right now, since Putin's war against Ukraine, we've seen the most dramatic rise in global food, fuel and fertiliser prices in recent history. The consequences of Russia's illegal aggression are hitting the poorest the hardest, and many of those most exposed are in Africa.

Can I remind you that there are no sanctions in place from the UK that are preventing exports of Russian grain or fertiliser to third countries. It is Russia's illegal blockade that is preventing Ukrainian grain from leaving that country, and it's that blockade that is hurting global supplies.

So time and time again, African countries find themselves buffeted by these global forces and we want to help African countries to insulate themselves against these pressures.

So over the past 9 months I have had the chance to visit 14 African countries. I've seen examples of the positive impacts the UK support can have. And I have seen the many qualities that make the continent such an attractive destination for investment and for new business.

For example, during my trip to Kenya in January, I saw how our investment of £75 million, through TradeMark East Africa, has eased trade by improving the capacity and efficiency of the Kenyan Ports Authority.

Back 10 years ago, before this investment, it took 10 days on average for goods arriving at Mombasa Port to then leave the port. That turnaround time is now just 3 and a half days. More goods moving more quickly means that the costs of trade are dramatically reduced, helping trade from Kenya, but also helping those who are importing into this country.

We are also working to support the creation of an African Continental Free Trade Area because trade integration is such a powerful tool to accelerate growth.

We have trained over 190 African trade negotiators, we are working with the Secretariat to cut red tape on cross-border trade and in March, when I last met His Excellency Wamkele Mene here in London, we announced a package of assistance to get the Agreement up and running.

And we are also – and this is a new announcement that I am sharing with you today – launching a pilot for our Standards Partnership programme in Ghana and Rwanda. This programme will strengthen supply chains, reduce barriers to trade by helping both countries meet global standards and regulations.

Then there's British International Investment – the UK's Development Finance Institution – this continues to be a core part of our economic partnership, offering honest, reliable alternative to financing, to other forms of financing that may come with more strings attached.

Under our G7 presidency, BII pledged to work with its G7 counterparts and multilateral development banks to ramp up the volume of investment into the African private sector – with a collective target of a massive \$80bn by 2027.

BII will target 30% of all new investments into green projects in developing countries over the next 5 years. This will make it one of the world's largest climate finance providers to African economies.

So what have I seen? In Senegal, I learned about the transformative impact the recent BII partnership to expand Dakar's port infrastructure will have

within the country and beyond. This will be Senegal's largest ever onshore foreign direct investment and will help to drive free trade and to drive economic growth.

In Tanzania, I saw how AgDevCo, a UK-funded agribusiness investor, has transformed 'Africado' into a thriving business. They're exporting avocados including to many British supermarkets, but they're also, in doing this, boosting the livelihood of 2,000 local smallholders.

During my visit to Nigeria, I saw the impact of £70m invested in women entrepreneurs and their small businesses.

In January again, I visited Malindi Solar in Kenya, this is East Africa's largest solar plant, built by the UK firm Globeleq using £32m of BIL financing. It's is the sort of green investment our partners need to transition into renewable energy, and help them to reduce their exposure to the increasingly unpredictable hydrocarbon markets.

All of these examples show that development finance is a win-win for African countries and for those who conduct business there.

But we know development finance is not enough.

So I am also very impressed by the range of impactful projects our export credit agency, UKEF, has supported across the continent.

UKEF's very flexible financing rules recognise the global nature of modern supply chains. This flexibility has played a significant role in encouraging overseas buyers to source from UK businesses, whilst also building capacity and creating jobs within developing countries.

British companies who use UKEF find these development benefits offer a major competitive advantage when bidding for contracts compared to some of our other international competitors.

Back in January, I launched Growth Gateway, this is a new business support service to expand trade between the UK and Africa. So far, they have connected more than 150 African & UK businesses.

Growth Gateway are here today. Where are you? Back of the room. Stand up. You're there! They're here, and they have a 'green trade & investment' event next Thursday. Please do reach out, speak to Growth Gateway, and find out what they can help do for your business.

I am also delighted that, next year, the UK is planning to host a second UK-Africa Investment Summit following on from the success that we had in the first summit back in January 2020. Just before Covid right? But wasn't it fantastic? And we're gonna do it again. This is demonstrating the UK's commitment to partner with African countries in order to drive growth, trade and investment opportunities all across the continent.

So ladies and gentlemen, creating resilient futures through sustainable economic growth is at the heart of all need we do, all we must do, and all we

are doing.

My pledge to you is that I will continue to do all I can to support a freer, safer, greener and more prosperous Africa, helping to deliver opportunity for all. And the UK Government stands ready to work with each one of you who shares that aim.

Thank you very much.