

# HRC41: UK Joint-Statement with the Equal Rights Coalition on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Mr President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Argentina and the United Kingdom, in our capacity as joint co-chairs of the Equal Rights Coalition, a grouping of 42 like-minded countries working together to achieve LGBTI equality. The full list of ERC sponsors can be found in the online version.

We thank the Independent Expert for his report, and for setting out the impact that the global shortage of credible or inclusive data has for LGBT and gender diverse people. Your report will become an important international resource, as well as a means of increasing awareness, and driving global action.

We agree with the Independent Expert that criminalization, stigmatization and negation all constitute factors that increase the risk of violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

We have an unshakable belief that human rights are universal. They must apply equally to all people, in all places, and at all times. We congratulate those countries that have made important progress towards LGBT and gender diverse equality, in particular in ending the criminalization of people for their sexual orientation and gender identity.

We are fully committed to the renewal of your mandate. You, and your predecessor have done what this Council asked of you. You have promoted awareness of the many, terrible aspects of discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity. You have identified and promoted good practices, and maintained a dignified and sincere dialogue with all stakeholders.

We ask all members of the Human Rights Council to recognise the simple truth that violence and discrimination can never be justified on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, and to support the renewal of this important mandate.

Thank you, Mr President.

ERC Co-signatories:

Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland,

## [British Embassy Paris: call for Franco-British projects](#)

### **Context**

The relationship between the UK and France goes back over one thousand years and the deep history between our two countries is reflected in the ties that join us. Today, our partnership spans across the full spectrum of issues, from trade and defence to science and culture.

What makes this all possible are the strong links between the people from across both our countries. People with shared aims and objectives who, helped by geographical proximity, work successfully together for the shared benefit of our nations and communities. Some of this happens in our capitals but it is important to remember that a lot of it does not. The relationship between the UK and France goes beyond London and Paris – our regional relationships hold just as much importance.

That is why, during the UK-France Summit in 2018, the President of the French Republic and the British Prime Minister, announced the first ever UK-France Mayors' Summit, which was organised in London in March 2019.

This Summit gathered over a hundred regional leaders from across France and the UK to reinforce existing cooperation between our towns and cities and develop new partnerships, such as between Manchester and Montpellier, Newham and Saint Denis and Kent and the Pas de Calais region.

We now want to build on the momentum of the Summit and support local towns, cities and communities in the UK and France to continue to pursue and generate innovative and relevant projects together.

### **Objectives**

Building on the success of the UK-France Mayors' Summit, we want to facilitate practical and innovative local initiatives between the UK and France, which support local objectives and benefit local communities. We are therefore making available a pot of money to do this, which is now open to local bids from across France and the UK. Bids could be anything from business forums with the aim of exchanging best practice to youth sport competitions.

Three main themes emerged from the Mayors Summit as being practical and impactful areas of collaboration.

We are particularly looking for bids that fall under these categories:

- environment and tackling climate change
- promoting innovation and digital and increase territory attractiveness
- promoting culture, heritage and sports at local level

We are looking for concrete and innovative project bids from a British and/or French local authority or communities. Bidders should at least already have secured the agreement from a partner in the other country to proceed with the project, even if the details are not yet clear. We regret that the British Embassy will not be able to support bids that have not yet secured a partner.

## **Selection criteria**

### **Who can apply?**

The British Embassy in Paris will review all applications from:

- British local authorities or communities who have already secured the agreement from a French partner to implement the project following a successful bid
- French local authorities or communities who have already secured the agreement from a British partner to implement the project [following a successful bid]. Whilst the Embassy can offer some light touch support, delivery of the project will be led by the bidder and any/or any local organisation they choose to work with

### **Criteria**

Project(s) selected must satisfy the following criteria:

Funds must be spent by 28 February 2020

### **Funding**

A total sum of £15,000 is now open to local bids. The fund will be attributed to one single project or to several projects, depending on the nature of the bids received.

### **Schedule**

Applications must be submitted online by 2 September 2019 to [clementine.martin@fco.gov.uk](mailto:clementine.martin@fco.gov.uk)

The jury will be composed of members of the British Embassy and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Local authorities will be notified of their selection or not by 30 September 2019.

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## [2019 GCA Conference – Speaker presentations](#)

The Groceries Code Adjudicator 2019 Annual Conference took place on 24 June 2019, at Church House, Westminster. Over 300 people registered to attend and hear from the Adjudicator and guest speakers about progress over the past 12 months, Code related issues in the groceries sector and plans for the future.

The theme of the conference was “Driving effective compliance risk management”.

- Christine Tacon: [Driving effective compliance risk management – Annual Review 2018/19](#) (MS Powerpoint Presentation, 6.1MB)

### [Driving effective compliance risk management](#)

- Gavin Ellison (YouGov): [GCA Annual Survey 2019](#) (MS Powerpoint Presentation, 6.57MB)

### [2019 GCA Annual Survey Results](#)

- Christine Tacon: [Driving effective compliance risk management](#) (MS Powerpoint Presentation, 4.59MB)

### [Forward Look – 2019](#)

- Michael Hutchings: [The Supply Chain Initiative – Tackling unfair trading practices in the EU](#) (MS Powerpoint Presentation, 836KB)

### [Tackling unfair trading practices in the EU](#)

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## [GCA launches new approach to drive effective compliance risk management by retailers](#)

In her final year as the GCA she is committed to working with each of the 12 large retailers to ensure all their practices, systems and behaviours are designed and structured to meet their obligations under the Groceries Supply Code of Practice.

She told the 2019 GCA Annual Conference: "I am introducing a common factors approach to guide their compliance risk management activity.

"However they are set up I want to see the retailers build for themselves a whole-organisation approach to Code compliance. This puts their compliance management thinking into their overall governance structures, their legal and audit functions as well as their internal systems and processes, into their training and their communication with suppliers.

"This is the best way to make sure that breaches of the Code don't happen and if they do, that they are quickly picked up and put right. It means retailers doing the right thing not only because that is what is required of them, but because it makes good business sense."

Ms Tacon set out her vision after her annual survey revealed continuing improvement in retailer behaviour. For the second year running only four out of ten suppliers reported having experienced an issue at any point in the year – an achievement in a year when two new retailers were added to those she regulates.

Last year's top concern for suppliers – delay in payments – fell from 19% to 13% in a period when the retailers' response to the issue was under formal monitoring by the GCA. Forecasting is now the issue most reported by suppliers – and that, too, has continued to decline.

In addition, Co-operative Group Limited topped the table as the biggest improver after significant scrutiny from the GCA following a year-long investigation which found that the retailer had breached the Code.

She said: "Co-op should be really pleased that the steps it has been taking to improve things are already being noticed by suppliers.

"More significantly, I believe my investigation into Co-operative Group Limited can be a game changer for the sector.

"The root causes I identified as a result of that investigation showed the extent to which the retailer had failed to take charge of its own Code compliance. Opportunities to manage and minimise its compliance risk had been missed, and themes emerged which were not only common to Co-op's breaches of the two paragraphs of the Code I investigated, but also familiar to careful readers of my previous two case studies.

"I now intend to build the lessons I learnt into my approach with all regulated retailers. I want to leave this role having achieved all I set out to do – and more."

The Adjudicator also said she would be examining how the Code should apply to the various buying alliances, joint ventures and merged entities run by the regulated retailers, which she said was important because arrangements of these kinds were increasing in the groceries sector.

And she announced that she had secured agreement from Waitrose and Ocado to the voluntary commitment achieved with 8 of the original 10 retailers in 2014

to limit forensic audits to the current year plus two.

Forensic auditing had been the top issue in 2014 when 45% of suppliers reported a concern with the issue – in the 2019 survey that had fallen to 7%.

Ms Tacon commented on the debate about whether the role of the GCA should be extended, whether up the supply chain or to cover things the Code is not currently designed to address.

“I am clear in my own mind that it would mean significant change in the way the work of the GCA is done. The levy funding model would have to be altered, so a few large retailers were not paying for the GCA to regulate arrangements over which they had no direct control.

“The collaborative approach I have established would not have been possible with a much larger cohort of regulated businesses, or if my job were to champion individual supplier issues or causes.

And thought would have to be given to the fit between any new price-based measures and the competition position underpinning everything the GCA is currently established to do.”

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## [Publication of HS2 statement of reasons document](#)

I am today (24 June 2019) publishing the [Statement of Reasons command paper](#) for the High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill. The command paper is titled the ‘Government overview of the case for HS2 Phase 2a and its environmental impacts’.

This is required by Parliamentary Standing Order 224A to assist the House during the third reading of the [High Speed Rail \(West Midlands to Crewe\) Bill](#).

This document summarises the work that has already been done to assess, control and mitigate the environmental impacts of HS2 Phase 2a, and explains why the government continues to take the view that the HS2 Phase 2a project is worthy of its support.

Copies of the Statement of Reasons will be made available in the libraries of both Houses.