

# News story: UK bids for COP26 presidency in partnership with Italy

The United Kingdom and Italy have today agreed to present a proposal for the UK to assume the Presidency of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in partnership with Italy. Building on previous proposals, the UK offers to host the COP and Italy the pre-COP event. The UK and Italy have a proven track-record of working together to champion the need for urgent climate action globally and have both played a key role in shaping ambitious European Union commitments to meet the Paris Agreement.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

Today through great joint diplomacy we have agreed a bid for a UK COP26 Presidency in partnership with our friends in Italy. Together, through our continued commitment to work across Europe and internationally, we will build a better world for our children.

The Italian Minister for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection, Sergio Costa, said:

This partnership between Italy and the UK sends a strong signal of determined and informed cooperation on climate change, which is a theme that requires a change of paradigm and which will dominate our agenda and that of future generations.

The United Kingdom and Italy are at the forefront of driving ambitious climate action.

Both countries have played a key role in shaping ambitious European Union commitments and are active members of the High Ambition Coalition, most recently standing together in support for the Statement on Stepping Up for Climate Ambition at COP24.

In the spirit of this co-operation, and building on our existing relationship, the United Kingdom and Italy are presenting a proposal for the UK to assume the Presidency of the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in partnership with Italy.

Within the Pre-COP, Italy will host preparatory events and a significant 'youth event', in recognition of the disproportionate impact that climate change will have on young people.

The partnership will be unwavering in its commitment to encouraging the

highest possible ambition through COP26, as well as its focus on promoting tangible action that brings to life the transformational change required to unleash the full potential of the Paris Agreement.

This partnership will form the cornerstone of a wider strategic partnership on tackling climate change and delivering ambitious climate action via COP26 between Italy and the UK, running through the UN Climate Action Summit this September, COP25, and the concurrent UK G7 Presidency and Italian G20 Presidency in 2021.

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## [Statement to parliament: Statement on attacks on health facilities in the Idlib area of Syria](#)

The government is extremely concerned by the current escalation of violence in north-west Syria, and appalled by the senseless attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and schools.

The UN has confirmed that since the end of April at least 25 health facilities, including at least two major hospitals, and 37 schools have been damaged due to airstrikes and shelling in north-west Syria.

These attacks are a clear breach of international law.

We call in the strongest possible terms on the Regime and Russia to cease these attacks, and help to end the suffering for those in Idlib.

The current escalation in violence is causing immense suffering for a civilian population who are already highly vulnerable. Even prior to this current escalation of violence, nearly 2 million people in the region have already been forced to leave their homes at least once, and nearly 3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

I would like to take the opportunity to highlight the support we are providing to assist those in such dire need across north-west Syria. Last year alone, the UK provided over £80 million in humanitarian assistance in the region – including supporting provision of food, shelter and other essential items for those caught up in the conflict.

And we are continuing that support this year too. In response to the recent situation, DFID's partners are scaling up their humanitarian response to meet the growing needs on the ground, including supporting health facilities.

A further escalation of violence, triggering waves of displacement, would likely overwhelm an already stretched humanitarian response.

So once again, I call on all parties to cease violence in Idlib, to respect previously agreed ceasefires, and to bring an end to the needless and deplorable attacks on civilians, hospitals and schools in the region.

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## **Press release: Joint Intelligence Committee Chair appointed: Sir Simon Gass**

The Cabinet Secretary Sir Mark Sedwill, with the agreement of the Prime Minister, has today announced the appointment of Sir Simon Gass as the new Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee.

Sir Simon has been the interim Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee since February while on loan from his role as Commandant of the Royal College of Defence Studies. During his diplomatic career, he has gained a wide experience of national and international security and intelligence issues.

Welcoming Sir Simon's appointment Cabinet Secretary, Sir Mark Sedwill, said:

I am pleased that Simon will be leading the Joint Intelligence Committee permanently, having done a fine job over the past few months as interim Chair, replacing the late Sir Charles Farr, who made an outstanding contribution to the UK's national security over many years.

Simon is a worthy successor and I look forward to continuing to work with him on intelligence and security.

Sir Simon Gass said:

I am very pleased to be appointed as Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee. Since taking over as Interim Chair, I have enjoyed getting to grips with the many issues with which the Joint Intelligence Organisation deals.

In my role as Chair, I shall ensure that the organisation and wider assessment community continue to provide excellent support and evidence to the Prime Minister, National Security Council and wider government on intelligence and security issues.

## Notes for editors

- Sir Simon Gass KCMG CVO is currently interim Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee and Commandant of the Royal College of Defence Studies (a post which he will now relinquish).
  - Earlier roles include Director General, Political, FC0 (2013-16); NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan (2011-12).
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## [News story: Home Office set to introduce fees for Section 5 firearms licences](#)

Fees will be introduced on specialist firearms licences for the first time to reduce costs for UK taxpayers.

The new fees will apply to Section 5 firearms, a category which includes the most dangerous types of guns, such as military grade weapons, in England, Wales and Scotland and are being introduced following a Home Office consultation.

Current licence holders include organisations such as manufacturers or dealers supplying the police or the army, and individuals such as gunsmiths carrying out the deactivation of prohibited weapons.

As part of the consultation, the Home Office also reviewed licences for shooting clubs and museums to possess firearms. As a result, fees for museums will be frozen because of the benefit that they provide to the public, while fees for shooting clubs will increase.

Fees are already payable for certificates to possess civilian firearms, such as rifles for target shooting or shotguns, commonly used for pest control.

Nearly 5,000 people responded to the consultation, which ran from January to March 2017. [Full summary of responses](#).

The fees being introduced will be significantly lower than those proposed in the consultation document. However, they will still allow the Home Office and the devolved administration in Scotland to recover the direct cost of administering licence applications, removing the burden from taxpayers and placing it on those benefitting from firearms licences.

<b>Licence type</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Museum first time	£200
Museum renewal	£200
Museum variation A	£110

Licence type	Fee
Museum variation C	£36
Club first time	£444
Club renewal	£372
Club variation A	£300
Club variation B	£206
Club variation C	£36
Dealer first time	£796*
Dealer renewal	£747*
Dealer variation A	£425
Dealer variation B	£206
Dealer variation C	£36
Carrier first time	£569
Carrier renewal	£540
Carrier variation A	£361
Carrier variation B	£206
Carrier variation C	£36
PMSC first time	£616
PMSC renewal	£565
PMSC variation A	£361
PMSC variation B	£206
PMSC variation C	£49
PMSC variation D	£316
Additional Guard	£48
DSEI	£389
Olympic shooter	£206
Trophy of War	£206

\*\*See paragraph 20 in the [full consultation response](#).

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## [News story: Ofqual response to Pearson update on A level maths breach](#)

The exams regulator has responded to the [update from Pearson](#) on the A level maths exam paper breach with the following statement:

An Ofqual spokesperson said: “Students, parents and teachers have been understandably upset by the rare, irresponsible actions of one centre which breached the security of Pearson’s maths exam taken on Friday. This is completely unacceptable. The integrity of the exam system relies on the trust and diligence of exams officers, teachers, students, exam boards and their

suppliers and social media companies – the vast majority of whom take seriously their responsibilities. When that trust is breached our priority, and that of exam boards, is to protect the interests of hard working students.

“We have a team closely monitoring Pearson’s investigation and its approach to awarding the qualification. Our aim is that the outcomes are fair to students. We have been assured by Pearson’s prompt action on Friday to identify the source of the breach and the involvement of the police. As a result of risks identified during its investigation, Pearson has taken the precautionary decision to protect students by replacing the paper for Thursday’s A level further maths exam.

“We will continue to work with the exam boards to make sure the remaining exams of the summer are safely taken. Once results are issued, we will review the summer, including this incident, and consider what more can be done to protect the integrity of the exam system.”