

# Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on international sanctions in response to Russian aggression in the Black Sea

The EU, together with Australia, Canada and the US, has imposed sanctions on individuals for their role in Russia's use of military force against 3 Ukrainian vessels and their crew in the Kerch Strait and Black Sea in November 2018.

The EU sanctions will prevent named individuals from travelling within the EU, and freeze any known assets linked to them in the EU.

The UK has consistently stood with Ukraine in opposing this attack and all instances of Russian aggression towards Ukraine, including Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea five years ago. We will continue to do so together with our international partners.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

Today, the UK and our international partners in the EU, Australia, Canada and the US have sent an unequivocal message to Russia that their attack on Ukrainian vessels in the Kerch Strait and Black Sea last year was absolutely unacceptable. These sanctions are another example of the international community standing up to Russia as it persistently violates international law. We will continue to take necessary action together in response to Russia's efforts to destabilise Ukraine.

Russia must immediately release the 24 detained servicemen and return the seized vessels. We remain deeply concerned for the safety and welfare of the servicemen who are unjustly held in Russian custody. Russia must allow free and unhindered passage of Ukrainian and international ships through the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov.

We, with our international partners, stand with Ukraine in opposing Russia's ongoing efforts to undermine Ukrainian security, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

**Further information**

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# News story: Statement by the governments of France, Germany, UK and US on the 8th anniversary of the Syrian conflict

Eight years ago today, tens of thousands of Syrians took to the streets to claim the right to express themselves freely, call for reform, and demand justice. The Assad regime's brutal response, and role in the conflict that followed, resulted in the largest humanitarian crisis since World War II.

We recognize the brave men and women from across Syria's diverse society who have worked towards a better future for all Syrians. We also remember the countless civilians who have lost their lives from torture, starvation, and attacks by the regime and its backers. Over 400,000 men, women, and children have been killed. Tens of thousands have been disappeared into Assad's prison system, where many have been tortured and killed. Countless families still have no news of the relatives they have lost, and have no closure.

Whilst the Assad regime and its backers try to convince the world that the conflict is over and that life has returned to normal, the reality is that the regime's suppression of the Syrian people has not ended. Approximately 13 million Syrians are now in need of humanitarian assistance, many of them still denied safe and unhindered humanitarian access by the regime. Over 11 million – half of Syria's prewar population – are displaced, unable to return home. The violence in Idlib has recently increased, and airstrikes have taken the lives of civilians and humanitarian workers.

The military solution the Syrian regime hopes to achieve, with backing from Russia and Iran, will not bring peace. The only way to end the violence and economic hardship as well as to secure a lasting settlement to the conflict is a negotiated political solution. And only a political solution can provide the necessary guarantees for all components of Syrian society as well as for Syria's neighbors.

The Governments of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States reiterate our support for the UN-led process in Geneva and UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254 to bring about a peaceful and stable Syria, and to consolidate the gains achieved by the liberation of territory from ISIS. We will continue to pursue accountability for the crimes committed in the Syrian conflict in order to achieve justice and reconciliation for the Syrian people. We are clear that we will not consider providing or supporting any reconstruction assistance until a credible, substantive, and genuine political process is irreversibly underway. Russia and Syria must respect the right of Syrian refugees to return home voluntarily and safely, end pretenses that conditions are right for reconstruction and normalization, and we call on them to engage seriously in the negotiations that alone can bring peace to Syria.

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## Press release: Preferred bidders selected for Sellafield project partnership

The Programme and Project Partners model will establish long-term relationships to deliver the site's decommissioning programme.

Sellafield is home to one of the most complex portfolios of construction projects in the world, stretching over many decades.

The new approach will support the transformation of the company from a nuclear operator into a world leader in environmental remediation.

It is designed to support faster, more effective project delivery, stability in design and construction supply chains, greater workforce flexibility, and local economic benefit.

The partnership is made up of four lots.

Preferred bidders are:

- Integration – Kellogg Brown and Root Ltd
- Design and Engineering – Wood Nuclear Limited
- Civils Construction Management – Morgan Sindall Construction and Infrastructure Ltd
- Process Construction Management – Doosan Babcock Ltd

Martin Chown, Sellafield Ltd supply chain director, said:

The Programme and Project Partners marks a major step-change in the way we deliver major projects and ultimately our clean-up mission.

It will revolutionise our relationship with the supply chain and ensure projects are delivered safely, quickly, and cost effectively.

The new approach will provide 20 years of sustainable employment in the design and construction supply chain and enhance the skills of the workforce.

The Programme and Project Partners is fundamental to our aspiration to develop and maintain internationally respected centres of nuclear expertise in our local communities.

There will now be a stand-still period prior to contract finalisation and

award, during which we will be unable to comment further.

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## [Speech: It's raining men: gender diversity and climate change](#)

**Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency – Women's Engineering Society Centenary Conference – 15 March 2019**

It's raining men.

Hallelujah.

It's raining men.

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Engineers are on the front line of protecting humanity from the impacts of climate change.

Unfortunately – (unlike in the song by The Weather Girls) – for women working in engineering, “tonight” probably doesn't feel like “the first time in history it's gonna start raining men”.

And that's just one of the reasons why the Women's Engineering Society is a vital organisation.

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It's a privilege to be asked to speak on your centenary.

But, we still need “Deeds Not Words” so I will be brief.

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One hundred years on and only 11% of the engineering sector are women.

That is not a women's issue.

The whole of society is missing out on much needed talent.

So, what can we do about it?

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In November, Penny Mordaunt – Secretary of State for International Development and Minister for Women and Equalities – announced the Government Equalities Office is moving into the Cabinet Office.

She said: "My vision for GEO is that we're the catalysts across government, amplifying and lending weight to the excellent work already underway in so many departments, and also across the country."

Placing equalities at the centre of government sends a message that diversity and inclusion are priorities for every department.

And, it provides a hub to join up the public sector with the business community.

We can use that.

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I've spent over 25 years working in finance.

In 2010, I helped set up the 30% Club, and now support them as an advisor.

Last year, we reached our goal of a minimum 30% female representation on FTSE 100 boards.

We are now campaigning for 30% women on FTSE 350 boards – and 30% women at senior management level of FTSE 100 companies – by 2020.

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In order to make change you need to beware the echo chamber.

Because the overwhelming majority of Chairs and Chief Executives are men, we need to work with those decision makers to champion female leadership.

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The 30% Club offers cross-sector mentoring to women at every level of their careers.

Mentors are leaders, both men and women, with substantial business experience.

We aim to help women get through the danger zone where the career paths of men and women diverge – and help them go on to realise their potential.

Please take advantage of this.

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The data shows that organisations who embrace gender diversity get better financial results and environmental outcomes.

Boardrooms who limit themselves to 50% of the available talent will always fail to understand 100% of their customers.

In the era of #MeToo, diversity and inclusion helps businesses stay one step ahead of competitors.

Investors who engage corporate boards on their diversity policies are showing sound financial judgment.

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At the Environment Agency, roughly 15% of our engineers are women.

Our target is least 30% by 2030.

We run 4 recruitment initiatives annually and we're aiming for 50% women in these.

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To meet targets you need metrics.

We publish pay gap data on average earnings for differences in disability, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation, as well as gender.

We've got a long way to go but high quality data on the drivers of pay gaps will help us improve action.

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We know that one of the biggest challenges is encouraging girls to choose the right subjects at school – something everybody has a role in changing.

Beyond school, the Environment Agency funds engineering courses at Brunel University, and we offer apprenticeships working in our Field Operations teams.

Our new 'Water Environment Worker' Apprenticeship will open in the summer.

Our full time staff can enrol on a whole range of apprenticeships, helping them develop throughout their careers.

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Ayo Sokale – a graduate civil engineer at the Environment Agency – is a member of the prestigious Institution of Civil Engineers' President's Future Leader scheme, where she is working towards her Chartered Engineer professional accreditation.

The Environment Agency's Women's Network – made up of over 2,300 women and men – works to 'encourage, enable and equip women to achieve their full potential in the workplace'.

Our Executive Director for Flood and Coast, John Curtin, has made the panel pledge and will no longer appear on all male panels at events and conferences.

Last year, my colleague Clare Dinnis launched the FCERM Women's Network to connect professionals working in flood and coastal erosion risk management.

This is already making a difference to the confidence of women in the wide range of disciplines which support engineering.

It's important to celebrate action and progress when you can.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says there are only 11 years before significant impacts – like storms, heatwaves, and floods – reach dangerous tipping points.

That's just 11 years before natural forces threaten the safety of communities and the stability of economies to a greater extent than ever before.

At the same time, there is a skills gap in engineering and there aren't enough people – men or women – pursuing the careers needed to fill it.

We need to take practical steps to change that. As William Wordsworth wrote:

“Not in Utopia, subterranean fields, Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where! But in the very world, which is the world Of all of us, – the place where in the end We find our happiness, or not at all!”

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The infrastructure which will shape the real lives of men and women through the worsening impacts of climate change is currently being created by a sector with only 11% women.

That is insidious.

But, we can be optimistic.

Everybody here today has the power to do something that helps engineering become more diverse and inclusive.

And – as engineers – everybody here today has the power to help realise the possibilities and opportunities for people, businesses, governments, and the natural world – that can be unlocked by humanity's efforts to manage climate change.

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Women need to do more than be the change we want to see in the world – we must also design the world we want to see.

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I wish the Women's Engineering Society – and all engineers – every success for the next 100 years.

Thank you very much.

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## [News story: Funding boost for child sexual abuse prevention helpline following jump in contacts](#)

The Home Secretary has announced £600,000 funding for The Lucy Faithfull Foundation's Stop It Now! child sexual abuse prevention helpline.

The charity offers confidential advice to offenders who want to change their illegal behaviour. The funding boost comes following a sharp 65% rise in callers and visitors to the Stop It Now! helpline and self-help website regarding viewing sexual images of children online.

In a speech in September, the Home Secretary set out his support for the charity. The funding will enable The Lucy Faithfull Foundation to support more people at risk of offending over the next 18 months.

The Stop It Now! deterrence campaign was launched in October 2015 to discourage people from viewing illegal sexual images of children online, and to offer help to those wanting to change their behaviour. It also supports the families and friends of offenders, and professionals.

More than 2,000 people contacted Stop It Now! last year through the helpline and its secure messaging service last year to change this behaviour.

Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

Child sexual abuse is a truly sickening crime and I'm committed to doing everything in my power to eradicate it from society.

It's vital we take action on a number of fronts. That's why we have given police and prosecutors the tools they need to bring offenders to justice, are educating young people on how they can protect themselves and will be legislating to ensure tech giants are fulfilling their responsibilities to protect our children.

But it is also important to focus on preventative measures that stop potential abusers from committing crimes in the first place. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation plays a key role in this work and has my full support.

Director of the Stop It Now! helpline, Donald Findlater, said:

People viewing sexual images of children online need to know this is not a victimless crime – children are harmed when these images



are first made, and afterwards when they are viewed or shared again. There are serious consequences for anyone arrested for such behaviour, possibly including imprisonment, losing their job, friendships and relationships, losing contact with their own children as well as ending up on the sex offenders register.

Confidential help is available to stop viewing these images and to stay stopped. Over these last 3 years thousands of people, mostly men, have come to us for help to get their lives back on track. This additional funding will ensure thousands more get through to stop their illegal behaviour and stay stopped.

Since the start of the deterrence campaign, 5,114 people have called the helpline seeking advice and support to stop viewing online sexual images of children.

A further 2,418 people called for support regarding concerns about someone else's online viewing behaviour.

People can also [access the Get Help website](#), which had over 40,900 users in 2018 compared to around 23,000 in 2016.

Callers agree actions that they can take to manage their behaviour and protect children as well as exploring other services and agencies available. Calls remain confidential and anonymous, unless a child is deemed to be at risk.

While the Stop It Now! deterrence campaign was launched in 2015 to specifically tackle indecent images of children online, the Stop It Now! helpline has been running in the UK since 2002. It deals with all aspects of child sexual abuse prevention, including direct contact abuse, child grooming, and harmful sexual behaviour of a child or young person.

Independent evaluation shows that, as a result of the advice, people take steps to control their behaviour, including stopping all internet or pornography use, installing controls and filters on devices and informing partners or family members.

The National Crime Agency estimates that around 80,000 people in the UK are regularly viewing images of child sexual abuse online.

In October, the Home Secretary travelled to the west coast of the USA to demand that tech firms do more to tackle online CSE and to develop a tool to detect and remove child grooming sites.

Other measures announced include:

- a taskforce, chaired by the Home Secretary, bringing together representatives from ad agencies, trade bodies and brands to ensure criminals don't have access to this funding stream
- a £250,000 innovation call for organisations to bid for funding to assist them in developing innovative solutions to disrupt live streaming

of abuse

- new tools to improve the capabilities of the Child Abuse Image Database (CAID) – the database used by the NCA and UK police forces to search for indecent images of children and increase the ability to identify victims

NCA Director Rob Jones said:

The scale and severity of child sexual abuse and exploitation we are seeing has significantly increased. Helping offenders to stop is really important, but it is absolutely crucial to help potential offenders before they even begin looking at the sexual abuse of children online.

The NCA welcomes this funding to support more people at risk of offending.

This needs to be part of a wider approach that includes the tech industry tackling offending, age appropriate education, and support for children, parents and carers such as in our Jessie and Friends campaign for four to seven-year-olds.