

Enhanced regional efforts to pursue peace in DRC

Thank you, President. Let me begin by offering a warm welcome to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Lutundula of the DRC, as well as the Representatives of Rwanda and Uganda. Let me also thank ASG Pobee and Special Envoy Xia for their briefings.

I will focus my intervention on the security and humanitarian situations in Eastern DRC and ongoing regional efforts to pursue peace.

The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the fragile security situation in Eastern DRC. The latest renewal of violence threatens recent efforts to pursue peace. In particular, we note the deep, and understandable, anger of countries in the region in relation to alleged cross-border attacks.

The United Kingdom recalls the impact that decades of violence in the Great Lakes has had on the lives, and futures, of the people of the DRC and the wider region. This Council cannot become hardened to the displacement of over 5 million people, as well as serious and sustained violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The United Kingdom welcomes recent enhanced diplomatic outreach and dialogue between countries in the region. The region's leaders, convened by President Kenyatta, have shown the statesmanship their people deserve. We also welcome engagement by the African Union and regional mechanisms.

It is clear that there are many actors in the DRC and wider region who would be happy to see this regional determination to deliver peace fail. In this context, we call on the leaders of the region to redouble their efforts to pursue dialogue, de-escalation and the use of effective regional mechanisms to resolve disputes.

We also reiterate our call on all armed groups operating in Eastern DRC to immediately cease violence and participate unconditionally in the ongoing political process in Nairobi.

President, high levels of violence and insecurity, perpetuated in particular by the Allied Democratic Forces, CODECO and M23 armed groups are hampering humanitarian access and risking the lives of a highly vulnerable population. Similarly, the continued kidnappings of humanitarian staff in the Sake-Masisi area mean vital assistance is not reaching those in greatest need. We urge the Government to take concrete action against criminality in the area and ensure the protection of humanitarian workers.

We are also concerned by the risk posed to civilians by intercommunal violence, particularly in IDP camps in Ituri province. A sustainable plan for their protection is desperately needed. In this regard, it is vital that there is strong coordination and a supportive relationship with MONUSCO in

order to sustain security and the protection of civilians. This will be particularly important as MONUSCO prepares to withdraw from Tanganyika province and focus its efforts on the conflict-affected provinces of North and South Kivu and Ituri.

President, we see this as a moment of both hope and risk for DRC and the wider region. The United Kingdom stands with those who seek a more peaceful future for the people of DRC and its region.

Thank you.

Bradford crowned UK City of Culture 2025

- Bradford wins title following a record 20 initial bids
- For the first time runners up will receive £125,000 to take forward elements of their bid

Bradford has been crowned UK City of Culture 2025, taking on the prestigious title from Coventry UK City of Culture 2021.

The winner was approved by Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries based on independent advice from a panel of experts led by TV writer-producer Sir Phil Redmond. The experts visited each of the four shortlisted places, which also included County Durham, Southampton and Wrexham County Borough, to learn more about the bids before making their final recommendation.

Bradford will now receive £275,000 in initial seed funding to make sure the city can hit the ground running and get the wheels in motion early as it develops its plans for 2025. This grant will help pave the way for a year of unforgettable cultural activities and events.

For the first time in the history of the UK City of Culture competition, each of the runners up will also receive a grant of £125,000 to support the bidding team in taking forward some of the most exciting elements of the bid.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

Congratulations to Bradford, which is a worthy winner of UK City of Culture 2025.

Art and culture should be accessible to everyone and this prestigious title will help Bradford deliver unforgettable events for communities on their doorstep.

There was stiff competition and I thank County Durham, Southampton

and Wrexham County Borough for their excellent bids.

Coventry has shown us how powerful the UK City of Culture title is at boosting investment, attracting visitors and leaving a lasting legacy for local people.

Bradford is a young and vibrant city with a rich heritage and its impressive bid drew upon its wide-range of local cultural assets including the Bronte Parsonage, Saltaire UNESCO World Heritage Site and the National Science and Media Museum.

The city is also investing in its future cultural assets having successfully secured £20 million from the Levelling Up fund to invest in the Squire Lane Wellbeing and Enterprise Centre, and is using another £4 million DCMS grant to redevelop the Bradford Odeon into a 4,000 seat live music and entertainment venue: 'Bradford Live'.

The judges were impressed by the ambition of Bradford's bid which, at its centre, celebrates the place where people live, the power of diversity and aims to create new opportunities for everyone. The bid encouraged strong local engagement with artists and residents, focused on creating a sense of local pride.

Sir Phil Redmond, Chair of the Independent Advisory Panel, said:

The selection is never about whether one bid is better than another, it is more that one bid has the potential to make a bigger and deliverable impact. For 2021 we asked Coventry to raise the bar previously set by Derry-Londonderry 2013 and then raised by Hull 2017. Challenged by the pandemic, Coventry have certainly done that and I am looking forward to seeing how far the cultural bar can be raised in BD25.

Winning the title can have a hugely positive impact on the place – attracting millions of pounds of investment, bringing in thousands of visitors and engaging the local community.

Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 used the title to transform the city through a spectacular year-long cultural programme, engaging an audience of over one million through more than 700 ticketed, unticketed and online events.

Martin Sutherland, Chief Executive, Coventry City of Culture Trust said:

Congratulations to Bradford on winning the UK City of Culture title for 2025. Everyone in Coventry wishes you the best of luck for your own fantastic and impactful year. This will be a truly remarkable time for your city and we look forward to supporting you as you prepare to celebrate all that is special about Bradford in 2025.

Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 has shown that the title has the power to engage people from across the whole community, including by training 1,515 City Hosts who contributed almost 36,000 volunteering hours. The title also helped attract £172 million in inward investment.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

We are delighted that Bradford has been given the prestigious title of City of Culture 2025. We are looking forward to working with Bradford to make their programme an amazing success and to help share its fascinating heritage on a worldwide stage.

Thanks to National Lottery players, we've been able to fund large-scale projects at past City of Culture award holders, Hull and Coventry. We have witnessed first-hand the transformational effects that this title can bring, creating a deeper sense of place, pride and identity. We look forward to the exciting opportunities it will bring to the people of Bradford now and into the future. Congratulations Bradford!

As part of its status as UK City of Culture 2025, Bradford will be eligible for a £3 million grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and now has three years to prepare for a year of groundbreaking cultural activities.

Additional quotes

Lord Mendoza, the Commissioner for Cultural Recovery & Renewal, said:

I am confident that Bradford will prove an outstanding City of Culture. I am fortunate enough to have visited Bradford over the last two years. The city's political, business and cultural leaders have a passionate commitment to creative innovation. Together they demonstrate that culture has the power to increase a place's vibrancy and civic pride. Coventry's success has shown that culture also has the power to drive major inward investment.

Darren Henley, Chief Executive, Arts Council England, said:

Being named UK City of Culture is awe-inspiring and life-enhancing, creating happier lives for residents and visitors alike.

Creativity is all about telling stories and this title unlocks a whole new narrative for a city. We saw it in Hull, we've seen it again in Coventry. As Bradford takes over, I'm excited to see how this great city will soar to new creative heights between now and the end of 2025 thanks to the work of brilliant artists, performers, creators and curators.

Skinder Hundal, Director Arts, British Council, said:

A massive Congratulations to Bradford for being selected as the next City of Culture 2025. This year-long celebration will showcase Bradford's unique qualities and open its cultural life to the rest of the world, the UK and local communities. The British Council look forward to supporting Bradford's international ambitions and seeing the city's culture, creativity and artistic excellence put firmly on the map.

Ruth Hollis, Chief Executive, Spirit of 2012 said:

Spirit of 2012 is proud to have supported the UK City of Culture Programme for many years, investing in Hull 2017 and Coventry 2021. It's not an exaggeration to say that major events like this have the power to transform people and places, building community pride, inspiring volunteering and creating opportunities for everyone to take part. And, it's not just Bradford who wins today. We're looking forward to working with some of the long and shortlisted places to ensure that their bid is a spark for volunteering programmes that build empathy, pride and connection, the key ingredients for the wellbeing of people and their places.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Full list of initial bids:

- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon
- The City of Bangor and North West Wales
- The Borderlands region, comprising Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Border, Northumberland, Cumbria and Carlisle City
- Bradford
- Conwy County
- Cornwall
- Derby
- County Durham
- Lancashire
- Medway
- City of Newport
- Powys
- Southampton
- Stirling
- The Tay Cities region
- Torbay and Exeter
- Wakefield District
- City of Wolverhampton

- Wrexham Borough Council
 - Great Yarmouth and East Suffolk
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[British Ambassador meets new Guatemalan Minister of Economy](#)

British Ambassador to Guatemala, Nick Whittingham, met with Janio Rosales, Minister of Economy, to discuss the country's plans under the strategy "Guatemala doesn't stop" which aims to improve the business environment, and attract more investments, especially in the infrastructure sector.

Ambassador Whittingham explained that the UK wants to foster honest, reliable investment, through trade and mechanisms like the support of UK Export Finance (UKEF) in the region, building on the UK's financial expertise and the strengths of the City of London and delivering the Prime Minister's vision for the Clean Green Initiative – supporting countries to grow their economies sustainably.

Ambassador Whittingham and Minister Rosales addressed the implementation of the Association Agreement between Central America and the United Kingdom, which has been conducted without problems since it came into force. In 2022, the agreement will host special committees to continue building on its benefits, in order to increase trade flows between Guatemala and the United Kingdom.

The Ambassador also stressed the importance of working together with Guatemala in multilateral forums, such as the World Trade Organization, in order to agree on a positive and forward-looking agenda that promotes inclusive and sustainable free and fair trade. He urged Guatemala to join the international community in pressing Russia economically to end the war in Ukraine, which is generating increased costs for food and fuels around the world.

The Vice Minister of Integration and Foreign Trade, María Luisa Flores; the Vice Minister of Investment and Competition, Francisca Cárdenas; and the Vice Minister of Registry Affairs, Juan Carlos Pellecer, also participated in the meeting.

In 2021, bilateral trade between Guatemala and the UK was US\$225 million; Guatemalan exports to the UK market were US\$140 million, while British exports to the Guatemalan market were US\$84 million. The main Guatemalan products exported were vegetables, fruits, coffee, beverages and sugar, while the main British products were cars, beverages, chemicals, and specialized machinery.

Minister promotes ties between Scotland, Denmark and the Faroes

Scottish exports to both countries are worth more than £695 million a year alone.

In total, the UK and Denmark have a £12 billion trading relationship (imports and exports) and the figure is £881 million for the UK and Faroes.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart undertook a packed programme in Copenhagen and Tórshavn, including:

- meeting key industry representatives and leading political figures to bolster our ties across trade, investment, green energy, telecoms aquaculture, space, research, security and the West's joint Russia/Ukraine response
- getting a progress report from one of the world's biggest energy companies on its investment into Scotland and the rest of the UK
- visiting the Faroese company that owns one of Scotland's largest fish farm firms to hear about their investment plans
- learning about connectivity in the Faroes archipelago (fixed link and technological)
- visiting a Faroese military cemetery to lay a wreath on a Commonwealth War Grave.

The Minister also discussed sanctions against Russia and the issue of Russian vessels in Faroese-UK shared fishing waters.

Minister Stewart said:

Scotland plays a vital role within the United Kingdom and it was an honour to promote our interests in Denmark and the Faroe Islands to encourage greater trade links to directly benefit Scottish communities.

We greatly value the strong and important ties between the UK and our European friends, neighbours and fellow NATO members. There are enduring cultural, business and trade links between Scotland and

Nordic countries.

While in Copenhagen, the Minister met with Her Majesty's Ambassador to Denmark, Emma Hopkins, and Carsten Grønbech-Jensen, Denmark's State Secretary for European Affairs and the Arctic. He also went to the Danish Parliament to meet MPs from the Foreign Affairs Committee.

There was also a visit to Avedøre power station, whose owner – Ørsted (Denmark's largest power company) – has invested in the Salamander floating offshore wind project off the east coast of Scotland.

In the Faroes he met with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs director Gunnar Holm-Rasmussen and Minister Magnus Rasmussen from the Ministry of Trade. Discussions included shared opportunities from the fisheries sector and access to the jointly managed Faroes/UK Special Area in the North Atlantic.

He visited Bakkafrost (the firm which owns the Scottish Salmon Company) to talk about their plans for investment in Scotland and met executives from Føroya Tele, a public telecoms company, about rural connectivity and planned investments in Orkney and Shetland.

The Minister will also meet the company that runs the archipelago's network of road tunnels to see whether it could be feasible to implement similar links between the Scottish Islands. As part of the visit he saw the world's 2nd-longest sub-sea road tunnel and first undersea roundabout.

Minister Stewart in front of the world's first subsea tunnel roundabout in the Faroes.

He said:

It was fascinating to see how the Faroes are using subsea tunnels to bring communities on the archipelago closer together. With three tunnels already operating – including one with the world's first undersea roundabout – another due for completion next year and a fifth in the planning stage, the Faroese are reaping the huge economic, societal and environmental benefits these fixed links bring.

The CEO of the company operating the tunnels was clear to me that he could see no reason why Shetland, Orkney and other Scottish islands could not help solve connectivity issues with similar subsea fixed links. I know this is a live issue under discussion between people on the islands and their representatives and I am happy to share my findings with them and the Scottish Government.

Ultimately it's a matter for those on the islands as to whether this is something they'd like to see developed in the future. Cost is a factor, as it is for ferry renewals, but it's more than about

the pounds and pence – the Faroes have shown how such tunnels can help their communities not only survive, but thrive.

At Tórshavn Military Cemetery, the Minister laid a wreath and paid his respects to World War Two casualties including British sailors who lost their lives when their ships were sunk by enemy action.

In both countries last week's visit was supported by the British Embassy in Copenhagen, part of the UK's extensive diplomatic network.

Minister Stewart pays his respects at a Commonwealth War Grave on the Faroes

[May Ministerial Meeting on Implementation Co-Chairs' Summary](#)

Introduction

On 12-13 May 2022, Ministers and high-level representatives from over 40 countries met in Copenhagen, Denmark, to follow up, promote and accelerate the implementation of key climate commitments and pledges, and assess the practical steps needed for progress this year. The meeting was co-chaired by the COP President from the UK, H.E Alok Sharma, and the COP President Designate from Egypt, H.E. Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry. The co-chairs wish to express their deep gratitude to Minister Dan Jørgensen and the Danish Government for hosting the meeting.

The agenda consisted of four sessions, covering implementation and action for: (i) adapting to climate impacts; (ii) averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage; (iii) reducing emissions and keeping 1.5C alive; and (iv) mobilising finance. Discussions took place through a combination of plenary and breakout groups. The co-chairs wish to thank all participants for their frank and constructive engagement during each session. They are also very grateful to all colleagues who moderated the break out group discussions and reported back afterwards.

In addition to country representatives, the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, the UN Secretary General's Special Advisor on Climate Action and Just Transition, the UN High Level Champions, and representatives from UNFCCC observer constituencies participated in the discussions. To promote transparency and inclusivity, ahead of the meeting the co-chairs published an open letter, with the discussion questions for the meeting annexed.

High-level summary

All Ministers recognised the urgency of responding to the findings of the IPCC Working Group II and III Reports this year through immediate action at scale to implement key individual and collective commitments under the UNFCCC, Paris Agreement and previous decisions, declarations and pledges, including most recently at COP26 and its Glasgow Climate Pact. Although participants noted the uniquely challenging global context, many also recognised that these challenges strengthen the need to accelerate practical action and support for the just transition to low GHG emissions and climate-resilient economies now and through this crucial decade. To achieve the goals of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, many welcomed the meeting's role in bringing refreshed and refocused attention on the steps needed to keep 1.5C alive, ensure effective adaptation, support the most vulnerable and ensure that finance flows at the necessary scale. Across the four sessions, Ministers highlighted the clear links and synergies between these issues.

Adapting to climate impacts

Recognising the alarming findings of the IPCC Working Group II Report, many Ministers called for a more focused drive to deliver “transformational adaptation”, with sustained attention needed to address gaps across policies, planning, implementation and finance. Ministers pointed to several elements as essential for this, including effective adaptation planning and additional National Adaptation Plans, national leadership and enhanced and adequate climate finance and investment. Ministers emphasised the importance of making progress at COP27 through the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation.

Ministers recognised the need for adaptation action to be better integrated into development planning and programmes in order to deliver a whole-of-society approach and catalyse more public and private investment in adaptation action. Many also highlighted current efforts and aims to mainstream adaptation across sectors, such as agriculture, water, forestry and infrastructure. Many Ministers called for more work to ensure adaptation planning is inclusive including through the involvement of youth and indigenous peoples and gender sensitive approaches, and driven by local needs and priorities and to better identify opportunities for cross-border regional collaboration, including on issues like ecosystems, water resources and mangrove forests.

Ministers underlined the need for a transformative agenda on adaptation at COP27, including to scale up, and improve timely access to, adaptation finance to help developing countries implement national and local adaptation plans. Many stressed the centrality of concessional and grant-based public finance, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable. There were clear requests for transparency at COP27 on the delivery of the doubling of adaptation finance by 2025 and expressions of support for more balanced adaptation finance. Some also recognised that substantial private investment will be needed to adequately address the finance gap. Several participants highlighted the importance of translating national and local adaptation plans

into investable pipelines of programmes and activities, and were hopeful of progress that could be made through enhanced collaboration between countries, Multilateral Development Banks and the private sector, including through improvements in local capacity and technology. The role of the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund were highlighted as important vehicles to channel adaptation finance. Multilateral Development Banks and the private sector have a role in providing and mobilising support to developing countries' adaptation efforts, including through improvements in local capacity and technology.

Averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage

Ministers recognised that loss and damage is happening now, and the clear need for practical, shared solutions to scale up action and support. They also welcomed that parties are becoming more open and constructive in approaching this issue. Many highlighted examples of the devastating impacts that climate change is already having on communities on the front line or progressively developing due to slow onset events. There was recognition of the particular predicament of countries that are vulnerable to impacts affecting their whole economy, driving indebtedness and incurring substantial economic and non-economic loss and damage. Several highlighted the need to build back better from losses and damages, in order to ensure communities and infrastructure become greener, more resilient and "future-proof" in the face of recurrent and worsening impacts. The Ministers and high level representatives underlined that further ambition and action on mitigation and adaptation can contribute to less loss and damage and thus the effort and costs associated with averting, minimising and addressing it.

Many stressed the importance of existing practical work being undertaken at national and local levels, including on prevention through early warning systems, such as through the UN Secretary General's initiative to protect everyone on Earth with such systems within the next five years, comprehensive risk management and reduction, and insurance. Several stressed the need to enhance local capacity to plan and deliver effective action, including through sound needs assessment. To support this, many Ministers called for the Santiago Network to be fully operationalised and funded by COP27.

There were strong calls for delivering on scaling up resources for loss and damage, building on the Glasgow Climate Pact. Delivery mechanisms for enhanced finance were discussed, with some emphasising the need for a new fund and others noting the opportunity to scale up and coordinate action better through existing climate, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian channels. Ministers looked forward to practical ideas for progress being identified through the Glasgow Dialogue next month.

Reducing emissions and keeping 1.5C alive

Ministers underlined their alarm at the findings of the recent IPCC WGIII Report, which highlights the closing window for action to keep 1.5C alive and the need for accelerated action before 2030. Ministers recognised that every fraction of a degree of warming worsens impacts greatly, so the faster

emissions are reduced, the greater our capacity to successfully adapt to these impacts and avert, minimise and address loss and damage. Recognising the challenging geopolitical context, there was a clear collective determination to tackle the current energy crisis alongside the climate crisis, and to seize the opportunity for a clean energy transition. Several highlighted the importance of scaling up international cooperation and support to maximise ambition and ensure just transitions and equity, taking into account the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. Participants highlighted appropriate finance as a main enabler for ambition and further action in developing countries.

Several Ministers made a clear call for a substantive outcome on mitigation at COP27, and there was a lot of attention on the expectation that all Parties revisit the 2030 emission reduction targets in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), and strengthen them as necessary to align with the Paris temperature goal. Some set out the work they are already doing to deliver on this and others made clear their plans to do so this year. Many pointed to the need for developed countries and G20 major emitters to lead the way in these efforts, and to consider equity and common but differentiated responsibilities in accordance with the principles of the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement; many also highlighted the role for all Parties to make an active response and some highlighted their concerns regarding perceived burden shifting from developed to developing countries. There were also clear expectations for Parties to respond to the request to communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-LEDS) this year, with a number signalling the work that is already going on to develop these, and the importance of engaging the private sector. Several Ministers stressed that success this year would depend in part on seeing progress in NDC and LT-LEDS ambition in the mandated Synthesis Reports, the deadline for which is 23 September.

Many Ministers highlighted the need for headline ambition to be backed up by credible and worked-up plans to reduce emissions across key sectors, including to implement Glasgow commitments on phasing down unabated coal power, phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, and a number highlighted the importance of the Global Methane Pledge. Many outlined what is already being done, such as responding to the positive market signals for renewables, progressing nature-based solutions, reducing deforestation and enhancing REDD+, developing new technologies like green hydrogen and carbon capture, utilisation and storage, and deploying zero emission vehicles. The need to keep track of progress in these areas was highlighted. To assist domestic decision-making, several called for work to set out clear policy options for innovation and decarbonisation in key sectors, identification of impactful interventions and creation of appropriate financing vehicles to mobilise large scale funding. Some saw the high-level ministerial roundtable on pre-2030 ambition at COP27 and the work programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation as enablers for this. Some also highlighted the importance of considering social and economic impacts of actions and policies.

Mobilising finance

Ministers recognised that progress was made on finance at COP26, but were clear on the need for further progress and accountability this year, including for the new collective quantified goal on finance. There was recognition that financial support and climate-aligned investment are fundamental for ambitious climate action, both overall and for specific sectors.

Ministers reiterated the importance of developed countries delivering as soon as possible, and by 2023 at the latest on the \$100bn per year goal. Many stressed the need for developed countries to further demonstrate progress on this agenda, including by assessing lessons learned from previous years, barriers to the scale up of flows and how these were being addressed, to ensure transparency and credibility. The commitment by developed countries to double adaptation finance by 2025 and the importance of a credible plan for how this would be achieved were also highlighted by many. In this context, Canada and Germany announced that they will lead a follow-up on the \$100bn Delivery Plan this year to promote predictability and transparency. This will focus on progress being made on the ten collective actions in the Plan, including increasing finance for adaptation.

Many stressed the need to improve access to finance for implementation of national and local plans and projects, particularly for adaptation, with calls for a system that is simpler, quicker, fairer, more coordinated and more transparent. Ministers recognised the work needed to address barriers and build capacity, with some highlighting a potential role for initiatives such as the Taskforce on Access to Finance. Some noted that greater alignment of processes among multilateral institutions represented low-hanging fruit in this area.

There was a strong expectation from many that COP27 should aim to accelerate the alignment of financial flows from all sources with the goals of the Paris Agreement, with some calling for a dedicated space to discuss this at COP27. Ministers recognised the need to mainstream climate goals into national policies and financial and economic plans to create the enabling environments, incentives and transparency to achieve this aim. Many highlighted the need to ensure commitments from the private sector are credible and actionable. Alongside this, scaling-up grant finance will remain vital, especially for certain geographies and interventions. In this context, the COP President, the COP President Designate and the High Level Champions were pleased to announce a new Independent High Level Expert Group on scaling up investment and finance to deliver on climate ambition and development goals, to be co-chaired by Dr Vera Songwe and Lord Nicholas Stern. The incoming COP27 Presidency also announced the launch of a series of five regional forums on “Projectalization of Climate Finance”, in cooperation with the High Level Champions and the UN Regional Economic Commissions.