

Press release: UK-Sudan Strategic Dialogue: Communiqué

The fourth meeting of the biannual UK-Sudan Strategic Dialogue was hosted by the Government of the United Kingdom in London on 16 October 2017, co-chaired by Neil Wigan, Director for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, and Ambassador Abdelghani Elnaim Awadelkarim, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan, accompanied by delegations from both countries.

The dialogue covered bilateral issues, the peace process, human rights, development, trade and investment, migration, defence engagement, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, and regional issues.

Both sides welcomed the steps taken since the last Strategic Dialogue meeting in Khartoum in March 2017 and agreed to continue joint work over the coming months. The parties welcomed the visit to Sudan by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the recent visit by the UK's Department for International Trade's East Africa Director. The UK congratulated the Government of Sudan on the recent decision by the Government of the United States of America to permanently lift bilateral economic sanctions, and both sides discussed steps to be taken to ensure that all Sudanese citizens benefit from this decision. This included agreeing to make progress on Sudan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and an offer from the UK to provide increased support on macroeconomic reform.

Both parties discussed the reconfiguration of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2362 (2017). The United Kingdom welcomed the improved humanitarian access and operating environment and the recent decision by the Government of Sudan to extend its unilateral cessation of hostilities in Darfur and the Two Areas. The Government of Sudan expressed its continued commitment to the implementation of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) Roadmap. Both sides agreed to continue the regular dialogue on human rights between the two governments at all levels, including UK support for Sudan's accession to the Convention against Torture (CAT), and the subject of trafficking in people.

Both sides looked forward to celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the British Council in Sudan next year and affirmed their strong commitment to continuing cooperation on education and cultural exchanges. Both sides expressed strong concern about the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. The UK welcomed the Government of Sudan's decision to open humanitarian corridors and their continuing commitment to supporting South Sudanese refugees. Both sides agreed the importance of a politically inclusive peace process and agreed to engage constructively in support of the current IGAD led Revitalisation Forum.

The two parties also agreed to continue working together on countering

terrorism and violent extremism. They welcomed the recent exchanges of visits to share expertise and agreed to continue and broaden these exchanges in future.

The UK and Sudan reaffirmed the importance of continued progress towards our joint goals, and a continued broadening of the bilateral relationship, and agreed to hold another Strategic Dialogue in Khartoum in six months' time.

On the side-lines of the dialogue, the visiting Sudanese delegation engaged with Members of Parliament through the two All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) focusing on Sudan. The UK also hosted a technical workshop on human rights for the Sudanese delegation, including Sudan's Special Rapporteur of the Advisory Council for Human Rights. Through this workshop, the delegation engaged with representatives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Justice and some of the UK's independent human rights bodies to discuss issues such as accession to UN human rights treaties and the role of independent human rights bodies in monitoring and reporting.

Press release: Company fined for failure to check product was made from legally-harvested timber

On 25 October 2017 at Westminster Magistrates Court, Angora 2011 Limited, trading as Lombok was convicted and fined £5,000 plus costs after pleading guilty at the first hearing.

The company failed to exercise the required due diligence when placing an artisan sideboard on the market, imported on 1 June 2016 from India.

A previous breach of the relevant regulations had earlier been identified and led to a Notice of Remedial Action being served on Lombok on 28 April 2015; this was followed by a warning letter dated 7 October 2015 when the company failed to comply with the notice.

On 20 October 2016, officers visited Lombok's central London showroom and found the required due diligence checks had not been made for an artisan sideboard for sale that had been imported from India.

When convicting the company District Judge stated these offences are "important", addressing environmental concerns, biodiversity concerns, and public confidence that companies do not endanger those. Companies are required to mitigate the risk of illegal logging. Lombok had failed to exercise due diligence when importing the artisan sideboard, with their previous failures an aggravating feature, though in mitigation they had reacted proactively.

Taking into account their mitigation and credit for an early guilty plea, Lombok was fined £5,000, plus a victim surcharge of £170 and prosecution costs of £2,951. The total of £8,121 was ordered to be paid within 28 days.

Mike Kearney, Head of Regulatory Delivery Enforcement, said:

The Government's Regulatory Delivery team will take action against businesses that persistently, deliberately or recklessly fail to meet their legal obligations.

Lombok failed to change their practises in response to our advice and so, given the impact of illegal logging, a criminal prosecution was appropriate. I am pleased that Lombok is now improving its supply chain monitoring.

This prosecution was brought by the Insolvency Service Criminal Enforcement Team on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Regulatory Delivery team.

Angora Limited (company number 08680457), was incorporated on 6 September 2013 and trades as Lombok, a purveyor of 'eastern-influenced and hand-crafted designer furniture, lighting and homewares' from 204–208 Tottenham Court Rd, London W1T 7PL.

The prosecution was brought by the Insolvency Service Criminal Enforcement Team on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Regulatory Delivery team to address the company's failure to exercise the required due diligence when placing a timber product on the market was contrary to Regulation 4(b) of The Timber and Timber Products (Placing on the Market) Regulations 2013. The judgment was pronounced at 12:30pm by District Judge Blake.

Regulatory Delivery is part of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It brings together policy expertise and practical experience to ensure that regulation is effectively delivered in ways that reduce burdens on business, save public money and properly protects citizens and communities. Regulatory Delivery is also responsible for sponsoring the British Hallmarking Council, a BEIS partner body.

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures. Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Insolvency Service's Criminal Enforcement Team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies. Further information about the work of the Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team is [available](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: Plymouth fly-tipper banned from waste collection business](#)

A fly-tipper who dumped household waste in the Devon countryside has been banned from working in the waste industry for 2 years. John McDonagh has also been ordered to carry out 100 hours unpaid work and pay £500 costs. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

McDonagh, of Victoria Road, Plymouth, cold-called a householder offering to remove waste for cash. Instead of disposing of it properly, he fly-tipped it in the surrounding countryside.

The defendant was caught after he removed some old window frames and builders rubbish from a garden in Shaldon Crescent, Plymouth in November 2016. The owner agreed to pay him £50 upfront followed by another £50 when he returned from the tip with a receipt. McDonagh loaded the waste into his Ford Transit van and told the householder he would return for the rest of the waste.

However, he never returned and dumped the waste in Beara Lane near Marley Head, South Brent. It was later discovered by a man who found the access to his field blocked by 2 one-tonne dumpy bags of builders' waste. One of the bags contained a delivery note from a bathroom company with a customer's name and address on it.

The man reported the fly-tipping to South Hams District Council and handed over the invoice to the council. The householder who had been duped by McDonagh said he felt 'disgusted' and 'ashamed' when told his waste had been fly-tipped.

Adrian Evans of the Environment Agency said:

Householders have a responsibility to ensure their waste is disposed of correctly and doesn't end up fly-tipped. If anyone offers to dispose of your waste in return for payment, make sure

they are a registered waste carrier and don't forget to ask for a receipt. If in doubt, don't hand over your waste.

Appearing before Plymouth magistrates, John McDonagh pleaded guilty to depositing controlled waste contrary to Section 33(1)(a) and 33(6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. He also admitted an offence under section 1 of the Fraud Act 2006 of dishonestly misleading a person into thinking their waste was being transported to a licenced tip for disposal.

In addition to being ordered to carry out unpaid work and pay £500 costs, McDonagh was made the subject of a 2-year Criminal Behaviour Order prohibiting him from being involved in any business involving the collection, transport or disposal of controlled waste. He is also banned for offering building or home maintenance services.

[Press release: UK Government celebrates 35 years of Welsh language broadcasting](#)

S4C occupies a hugely significant place in the cultural landscape of Wales UK Government Minister Guto Bebb said today (1 November) as the Welsh language broadcaster celebrates 35 years of high quality broadcasting.

After the first programme went on air on 1 November 1982, the channel moved from a bilingual to 100% Welsh-language service with the Welsh digital switchover in 2010.

Since then, S4C has grown to develop more and more original content reaching an audience of over 9 million across the UK. It has also expanded its online presence with 9.1 million TV viewers and 18 million viewing clips of S4C content on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube throughout the UK in 2016-17.

UK Government Minister Guto Bebb said:

S4C is a longstanding and significant part of the UK's rich public service broadcasting landscape. Both the channel and its content make an important contribution to the cultural and economic life of Wales, to the prosperity of the Welsh language and to the strength of our creative sector.

From Patrol Pawennau (Paw Patrol) to Pobol y Cwm (People of the Valley), the channel serves all ages, who are both fluent Welsh speakers and those who are taking their first steps to learning the

language.

This anniversary is also an important reminder of the role the creative industries can play in driving growth through the creation of jobs and attracting inward investment. The UK Government has repeatedly emphasised its commitment to a strong and independent Welsh language TV service. We want to see the channel thrive and embrace the opportunities of a digital age.

With a clear vision for the years ahead, S4C's future is undoubtedly bright. I'd like to extend my congratulations to the new Chief Executive, Owen Evans and to each and every member of staff, who work with such relentless dedication to showcase the talents and capabilities of the Welsh creative industry. Here's to another 35 years and more.

Further information:

- Guto Bebb launched [an independent review of the channel](#) at the National Eisteddfod in August this year. The review, chaired by Euryng Ogwen Williams, will examine the channel's remit, funding arrangements and its governance. The results of the review are expected to be published later in the autumn.
- In March this year, the UK Government approved a £10 million loan for the relocation of the channel's headquarters to Carmarthen, which will create more than 800 jobs in the local area. This cash will also mean that technical facilities can be shared with the BBC in Cardiff, reducing the S4C's overhead costs and increasing its creative pool of talent.

Speech: "Children are innocent bystanders in times of conflict, caught up in the atrocities taking place around them"

Thank you Mr President for convening today's important debate. I would also want to thank the Secretary-General for his report on Children and Armed Conflict, and also the contribution of the special representative Ms. Gamba, for her insights on children in armed conflict and her important work in this area, and in doing so to recognise the hard work done by the UN country task

forces and Peace Operations – often in difficult circumstances – to provide reliable, evidence-based information on violations against children. I would also at this juncture like to acknowledge the contribution of Mubin Shaikh and his personal insight into this important area.

When it comes to children's lives, no effort can be spared. Children are innocent bystanders in times of conflict, caught up in the atrocities taking place around them.

That is why the evidence in the annual report is so alarming. It shows that grave violations continue to be committed on an increasing scale. In the many conflicts taking place around the world, children are being maimed and killed, recruited and used as child soldiers, and denied basic humanitarian access.

In some conflicts, there has been a growing trend to detain children on security charges. This is deeply concerning. No child should be detained unless they are charged with a recognisable criminal offence, and only in accordance with international law and juvenile justice standards. Authorities should seek alternatives to detention and if they do detain juveniles, they should prioritise their rehabilitation and reintegration, and fully protect their human rights.

The United Kingdom considers the agreement and implementation of the UN Action Plans to be a vital step in improving the protection of children. We therefore call on all parties listed within the annex of the Secretary-General's report that have not put these measures in place to do so as a matter of priority. And we call on all other parties who have put measures in place to honour their commitments in full.

Mr President, I would like to highlight two aspects of this issue that are of particular concern to the Government of the United Kingdom.

The first is to ensure that children continue to have access to education in times of crisis. This is vital, first, in order to provide young people with at least a degree of normality and stability; and secondly to give them the skills they need to advocate for a better, more peaceful future for themselves, for their families, and their communities.

The UK continues to provide educational support to the millions of children around the world in need of education in emergencies and protracted crises. Following on from UNICEF's 'No Lost Generation' initiative, where £82 million of UK International Development funding was allocated to provide protection, trauma care, and education for children affected by the crisis in Syria and the wider region, the UK is committing £30 million this year in support to 'Education Cannot Wait'.

I urge all Member States to support such initiatives, which help provide education to those children most in need.

The second issue of particular concern to the UK is the sexual exploitation and abuse of children by UN peacekeepers and other personnel operating in the

name of the United Nations.

The annual report shows that this abuse remained a major issue in the Central African Republic in 2016. It is abhorrent and absolutely unacceptable. UN peacekeepers must respect and protect the rights of children.

Children expect and trust peacekeepers to protect them – every time a peacekeeper fails to do so, that trust and the integrity of the UN are gravely undermined. However, it is not only peacekeepers who commit offences against children. Reports continue to indicate that some personnel in the development and humanitarian agencies are also guilty of abusing their position. In the past, our collective failure to prosecute allegations of child rape and sexual exploitation and abuse has sent a signal to predators that working under the UN banner protects them from being held accountable for their actions and facing justice. There must be no more impunity for perpetrators of such heinous offences against innocent and vulnerable children.

The United Kingdom will insist on a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse and we expect the UN to demonstrate the highest possible standards of protection for children, including actions to prevent abuse, investigate all allegations, and report annually on progress. The United Kingdom's International Development Secretary's comments on child rape in her UN reform speech resonated strongly at the UN General Assembly. And we will continue to work closely with the UN and bring together other Member States to explore how to improve accountability of any of our citizens who face substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. We want to end the culture of impunity, so all children are protected, and all those charged with abuse are brought to justice.

Finally Mr President, I want to acknowledge the progress that has been made and look to the future.

In 2016, Colombia's peace agreement with the FARC-EP brought an end to over 50 years of conflict. Reincorporation of FARC-EP minors is now a major focus for implementation of the peace accords. We have also witnessed a temporary ceasefire with the National Liberation Army, including a commitment to stop recruiting children into their ranks. These are encouraging early steps, in what will hopefully become a more substantive peace process.

Elsewhere, UN engagement with non-state armed groups in Mali and Sudan has led to the signing of two new action plans, whilst in the Philippines more than 1,850 children were freed from the military wing of the Mono Islamic Liberation Front.

These are important milestones; perhaps unthinkable over 20 years ago when Graca Machel's report was released. Such achievements would not have been possible without the mandate and the work of the Special Representative, which the UK continues to fully support.

Children, Mr President, are the innocent victims of conflict. Let us today renew our determination to work together to protect the many children caught

up in the conflict, to get them back to school and give them hope of a brighter future free from fear, free from conflict.

Thank you.