

[Press release: PM call with President Xi: 25 September 2017](#)

The Prime Minister spoke to President Xi of China earlier today.

They agreed the UK and China should continue to consolidate the “Golden Era” of bilateral relations and deepen our strategic partnership, including on trade and investment, where President Xi noted that Chinese confidence in the UK economy remained very strong and where they agreed there was potential to build an ambitious post-Brexit bilateral trading arrangement, and on security cooperation, where President Xi offered his condolences over the recent London terror attack.

They agreed the situation in North Korea was deeply troubling, and that North Korea’s recent missile tests were a flagrant violation of international commitments.

They agreed the latest sanctions were a powerful sign of the international community’s unity in opposing North Korea’s illegal tests and that strict implementation and enforcement of the sanctions was vital.

They agreed that as joint permanent members of the UN Security Council, there was a particular responsibility on the UK and China to help find a diplomatic solution. They agreed the UK and China should continue working closely together to increase pressure on the North Korean regime to abandon its nuclear programme.

[News story: Subsidy free solar comes to the UK](#)

The 45 acre Clayhill solar farm and energy storage facility near Flitwick in Bedfordshire, built by energy provider Anesco, is made up of over 30,000 solar panels – enough to power 2,500 homes.

The solar farm will be the first in the UK to be built and operated without Government subsidy, following a fall in the cost of solar panels by two thirds since 2010. To date the industry has successfully installed 12GW of solar capacity across the country.

Battery technology also has an important role to play in making renewable energy a viable part of the UK’s energy network by ensuring energy can be captured and stored for use when needed. The Clayhill development features five battery storage units. These help maximise the usable output from

renewable power sources such as solar, which generates different amounts of energy depending on the weather.

Claire Perry, Minister for Climate Change and Industry said:

The cost of solar panels and batteries has fallen dramatically over the past few years, and this first subsidy-free development at Clayhill is a significant moment for clean energy in the UK.

Solar panels already provide enough electricity to power 2.7 million homes with 99% of that capacity installed since 2010.

The Government is determined to build on this success and our ambitious Clean Growth Strategy will ensure we continue to lead the world on the transition to a low carbon economy.

The Government expects to see more developers install and connect subsidy-free sites later this year.

Steve Shine OBE, Anesco's Executive Chairman said:

For the solar industry, Clayhill is a landmark development and paves the way for a sustainable future, where subsidies are no longer needed or relied upon. Importantly, it proves that the Government's decision to withdraw subsidies doesn't have to signal the end of solar as a commercially viable technology.

This landmark moment for the clean energy industry comes after the Government set out its plans for a [smarter energy system](#) which set out a future in which energy providers will take advantage of new technologies such as battery storage to benefit consumers.

This was followed by a record amount of renewable capacity being secured in the latest [contracts for difference](#) auction and new Government measures to accelerate investment in clean growth by building on the UK's strength in [green finance](#). There was also confirmation from the Prime Minister that [dirty coal generation](#) would end by 2025.

Today, National Grid announced that more than half the UK's electricity came from low carbon sources in the last three months, making it the 'greenest' summer on record.

Press release: CMA steps in to give people a better deal on comparison sites

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has published its final report following a market study into the use of price comparison sites and other apps.

The year-long examination found that these sites offer a range of benefits, including helping people shop around by making it easier to compare prices and forcing businesses to up their game.

But where sites are not working in people's best interests, the CMA is taking action. As part of this, it is opening a competition law investigation into how one site has set up its contracts with insurers, because it suspects this may result in higher home insurance prices.

The CMA has also laid down clear ground rules for all sites on issues such as communicating how they plan to use people's personal data and clearly displaying important information like price and product description.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Chief Executive, said:

Our study has found that most people in the UK have used a comparison site at least once so it is vital that everyone gets the benefits they deserve.

The good news is that more than 90% of the people we surveyed were very or fairly satisfied with the sites they used.

But we have also found that improvements are needed to help people get even better deals. We have set out ground rules for how sites should behave, as well as being clear on how regulators can ensure people have a better experience online.

We are also taking enforcement action where we suspect the law may have been broken.

The main recommendations from CMA's final report include:

- All sites should follow our ground rules. They should be Clear, Accurate, Responsible and Easy to use ([CARE](#)).
- All sites should be clear about how they make money; how many deals they're displaying and how they are ordering the results.
- Sites should be clear on how they protect personal information and how people can control its use.
- It should be made as easy as possible for people to make effective

comparisons or use different sites, for example through better information about products.

- All regulators with a stake in this area should work together to ensure people are well protected.

The report also reveals that nearly two-thirds of people using a price comparison site visited more than one when shopping around. This is something the CMA is advising everyone to do if they want to get the best deal.

The CMA will now continue to work with the sector, regulators, and other bodies to ensure its recommendations are understood and taken on board.

Following this report, it will also soon be announcing next steps on consumer protection work in car hire and hotels.

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
2. The CMA launched its market study into digital comparison tools (DCTs) in September 2016 and published an update on 28 March 2017.
3. The CMA's definition of a DCT is: digital intermediary services used by consumers to compare and potentially to switch or purchase products or services from a range of businesses.
4. For further information on this market study and to view the report, visit the [market study case page](#).
5. Market studies are carried out using powers under section 5 of the Enterprise Act 2002 (EA02) which allows the CMA to obtain information and conduct research. They allow a market-wide consideration of both competition and consumer issues. Market studies take an overview of regulatory and other economic drivers in the market and consumer and business behaviour.
6. For further information on the CMA's competition law investigation into one comparison site visit the [investigation case page](#).
7. The CMA's competition law investigation is being carried out under the CMA's powers under Part I of the Competition Act 1998.
8. Media queries should be directed to press@cma.gsi.gov.uk, on 020 3738 6337.

[Press release: 200 miles and countless tests: Porton Man three years on](#)

Three years after it arrived, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's

(Dstl) Porton Man is proving its pioneering value by helping to shape the way the UK and the US develop the latest in suited protection against chemical and biological (CB) warfare.

The life-size robot mimics the movement of a serviceman in combat. Built using lightweight materials developed for Formula One racing cars, it can walk, march, run, sit, kneel and lift its arms to sight a weapon like an infantry soldier.

Based at Dstl's Porton Down site in Wiltshire, it is the only robot of its kind in the world that can carry out real-time tests. This enhanced capability allows scientists can assess chemical penetration through materials as it happens during exposure in a specially designed contained chamber.

Dstl scientists say this model of Porton Man is a step change in technology and while a number of similar systems exist around the world, they are unable to conduct live agent chemical warfare agent tests.

The model has initiated a close working relationship with US Department of Defence resulting in Porton Man now being used by the US to support Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) programmes.

Dr. Terrence G. D'Onofrio is a US Scientist who has been working with the Dstl team for the last two years, says: "The ability to measure cumulative and real-time breakthrough of actual chemical agent through a whole-system protective ensemble is a critical advancement for protecting our forces. Such a capability is an important opportunity to expand international collaboration, promote interoperability of equipment between the nations, and assist with burden sharing of research, testing, and evaluation".

Since its introduction Porton Man has run over 200 miles, carried out an extensive number of trials and has been exposed to various chemical warfare agents.

Chemical and biological warfare is very much still a world-wide threat; historically, older Porton Man models helped introduce the current UK in-service CBR suits (MK4a). This new Porton Man has now been involved in an extensive number of chemical warfare trials and is providing 'never seen before' results, which will inform design of the next generation of CBR protection.

[Porton Man video](#)

[Press release: Foreign Secretary](#)

statement on Kurdish referendum

Commenting on the referendum being held in the Kurdish Region of Iraq, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK does not support this referendum and continues to back the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. We believe that any referendum should be agreed with the Government of Iraq.

With our international allies, we proposed an alternative plan which would have seen negotiations take place between the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to address all issues of dispute. This alternative would have given the opportunity for the aspirations of the Kurdish people to be met. It is regrettable that a part of the Kurdish leadership rejected the proposal.

The long-term security and prosperity of Iraq and Iraqis can only be met through dialogue and cooperation. I urge all sides to refrain from provocative statements and actions in the aftermath of the referendum. The priority must remain the defeat of Daesh and returning stability to liberated areas.

Further information