

## Head of OSCE Mission in Kosovo: UK response, 5 May 2022

Thank you, Mr Chair. Welcome Ambassador Davenport and thank you to you and your team for the comprehensive report, and its thorough summary of developments over the reporting period. This report sets out a number of notable achievements over the past period.

I would like, in particular, to highlight the work of the Mission's regional centres in Kosovo, which continue to provide such comprehensive coverage on the ground, especially in areas outside the capital, Pristina. Furthermore, I would like to express our gratitude for the Mission's spot reports during the reporting period, which have continued to be both timely and informative.

As your report notes, Russia's pre-meditated and unjustified invasion of Ukraine will have caused anxiety among residents of all communities in Kosovo – an invasion we condemn in the strongest terms

Mr Chair, the United Kingdom is a long-standing and strong supporter of Kosovo as an independent and sovereign state. Our commitment to Kosovo, forged in the worst of times, remains firm and steadfast. In this context, we value and appreciate the Mission's renewed commitment to its work to strengthen Kosovo's institutions, many of which – as this report notes – it played a role in establishing. In particular, strengthening inclusive, transparent local governance, in a way which takes into account the needs and views of all communities, remains a very important aspect of this work. We join others here in condemning the attacks against the Kosovo police in the northern municipalities in Kosovo.

I would like to underline the UK's appreciation for the willingness and preparedness of the Mission to facilitate a solution that would have enabled Serbian citizens living in Kosovo to vote in Kosovo, in the Serbian referendum of 16 January and in the Serbian elections of 3 April. We have spoken previously on this issue in this forum. On protecting cultural heritage, your report also describes recent developments related to the Serbian Orthodox Monastery of Visoki Dečani. We welcome the Mission's continued monitoring of these issues, including the Special Protective Zones, and its tireless work to ensure the rule of law is upheld in relation to these difficult issues. We refer to the Quint statement on this matter, which is noted in the report.

Lastly, we – alongside our international partners – continue to support strongly the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo, working towards a comprehensive and sustainable normalisation agreement that will be to the benefit of the people of both countries. It is vital that both sides refrain from any rhetoric or activity which may reduce the chances of constructive progress in the Dialogue, and an eventual permanent agreement. We value the continued work of EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajcak, which this report sets out in detail. It is incumbent on both Kosovo and

Serbia to seize the opportunity for renewed, good-faith engagement in the Dialogue, honouring the Dialogue commitments they have made so far, and holding regular talks at all levels in a spirit of compromise, and openness to positive, imaginative solutions.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you, Ambassador Davenport, for your leadership of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo during the reporting period, and your team for their commitment, hard work and expertise.

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## **RE:ACT to provide 500 Games Responders for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games**

The RE:ACT Games Responders will be drawn from its member community, which consists predominantly of military veterans and emergency services personnel. They will bring their skills in public engagement to support the security workforce at four venues, helping to make Birmingham 2022 a safe and memorable experience for everyone attending.

Birmingham 2022 will take place across the West Midlands from 28 July to 8 August 2022 and will be the largest sporting and cultural event ever held in the area. The Games is expected to welcome over one million spectators and attract a global audience of over 1.5 billion.

RE:ACT has been assisting the NHS to help relieve pressure on critical services. During the height of the pandemic, RE:ACT maintained its rapid response for 449 consecutive days, supporting frontline organisations and vulnerable communities. It continues to give its support to UK resilience, whilst also preparing to return to international disaster response after two years focusing on supporting the UK through the pandemic.

Toby Wicks, RE:ACT Chief Executive, said:

This is a super opportunity for RE:ACT to demonstrate the capability of our outstanding community at a high-profile event. We're used to operating under pressure in harsh environments, so this is well within our expertise and comes at an exciting time as we're learning and growing as an organisation. "We're always looking to welcome new team members into our organisation, and we'd encourage people to sign-up through our website.

This is a serious task and it's great that our teams will be able

to show their strengths in a different context. We're thrilled to play our part in helping make Birmingham 2022 a great success and I know our Games Responders are excited to be involved.

General Sir Nick Parker, RE:ACT Chair, said:

We are delighted to be supporting Birmingham 2022. After my experience providing military support to security at London 2012, it will be a great privilege for RE:ACT Responders, who include highly committed veterans and members of the emergency services, to play a part in making this a sporting event to remember.

Nick Knight, Birmingham 2022 Director of Security, said:

Being a veteran myself, and understanding the hardships our military personnel endure upon leaving the military, any opportunity to showcase veterans' skills, mindset and discipline is an opportunity we cannot miss. This partnership with RE:ACT is innovative and groundbreaking as it has never been considered in previous Commonwealth Games.

Birmingham 2022 have signed up to the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme and have achieved the Bronze award so this initiative demonstrates our commitment to those who have loyally served our country and now seek future opportunities.

RE:ACT members will receive training and recognised qualifications, enabling them to deploy during the Games to recognised Security Industry standards. The qualifications, and more importantly the operational experience of deploying during the Games, gives them as individuals and as a team, huge legacy employment opportunities, enabling them to make that transition from military to civilian life with greater ease.

I am excited to welcome RE:ACT on board and cannot wait for them to get involved in the delivery of the games and truly showcasing their talents in what will be a safe and successful Games.

Darren Hall, Chief Operating Officer of the Commonwealth Games Federation, said:

We are proud to be partnering with RE:ACT as they become an

Official Military Veteran Provider for Birmingham 2022. Their wealth of experience and refined skills in public engagement and security will be invaluable in ensuring the safety and enjoyment of our spectators at four venues during game time.

## **About RE:ACT**

RE:ACT is a humanitarian response organisation, operating in the UK and overseas. RE:ACT specialises in high tempo, dynamic and complex environments, rapidly deploying to provide urgent assistance to people in need.

During Covid, RE:ACT provided critical support to frontline organisations and vulnerable communities, including with PPE and emergency food distribution, mortuary assistance, support to critical care staff in NHS hospitals and community testing and mass vaccination centres.

RE:ACT has deployed teams in response to complex disasters in Nepal, Indonesia, The Bahamas and Mozambique, working closely with affected communities, as well as regional and international humanitarian actors, including the UN.

Visit [re-act.org.uk](https://re-act.org.uk) to find out more.

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## **[Becoming a planning inspector: What's stopping you?](#)**

The survey is aimed at individuals from a range of professions that are most typically aligned to the role of planning inspector including (but not limited to) town planners, legal professionals, surveyors, architects and civil engineers.

In particular, we would most like to hear from anyone who has previously considered a career as a planning inspector (band 1), for example during a previous recruitment campaign, but decided not to apply.

The research will provide valuable data to help us refine our recruitment strategy so that it is suited to a diverse range of potential candidates.

## **Take part in the research**

[Complete the online survey](#) (it takes less than 5 minutes). Survey closes on 20 May 2022.

Your response will be anonymous and will not be used for any other purposes than to inform our attraction and recruitment strategy.

## About the planning inspector role

The band 1 planning inspector role is an entry level role, which is a busy and varied one dealing with planning appeals – typically around 3 cases per week.

A planning inspector considers evidence for each appeal and decides whether the proposal is allowed or not. The role involves travel across England to undertake site visits with most of our work in London and the South East. After training, planning inspectors may also undertake more complex casework and hear evidence via hearings and inquiries.

It is predominantly a home-based role which offers a considerable amount of flexibility in how work is scheduled and how you manage your work. Chartered or full membership of a relevant professional body is a mandatory pre-requisite for applying as is willingness to travel frequently.

Starting salary is £41,015 rising to £47,664 after completion of a 12 to 18 month training programme.

For further information about the role:

[Read more about the work we do](#)

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## [UK denounces Russia's appalling attempts to legitimise war against Ukraine: UK statement to the OSCE](#)

Thank you, Mr Chair. Since Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, week after week we have seen the brutality of Russia's actions.

The Russian Federation has attempted, in vain, to legitimise its war. This includes in the southern city of Kherson, where Russia has sought to assert its control of the city and surrounding areas through installing a pro-Kremlin administration. So far this administration has stated a return to Ukrainian control is "impossible" and announced a four-month currency transition to the Russian rouble from 1 May. These statements are likely indicative of Russian intent to exert strong political influence in Kherson over the long term.

We are further appalled by reports that Russia intends to stage a referendum in Kherson oblast, in an attempt to provide a pretext for consolidating its control over the area. We saw this in 2014, when Russia held an illegitimate referendum on the accession of Crimea into the Russian Federation to

retrospectively justify its seizure of the Peninsula. This so-called referendum was conducted in a heavily militarised environment and was clearly illegal under the Ukrainian Constitution.

The international community refused to recognise the result in Crimea in 2014. We must continue to condemn any referenda Russia attempts to illegitimately conduct on Ukrainian soil. The people of Kherson have bravely demonstrated their sovereign will to resist and remain part of Ukraine. We remain fully committed to the Ukrainian people's right to determine their future.

[As my Foreign Secretary set out in her Mansion House Speech last week](#), we need a new approach, one that melds hard security and economic security, one that builds stronger global alliances and where free nations are more assertive and self-confident. As such, we must double down on our support for Ukraine.

As part of this, the UK will carry on supplying Ukraine, alongside our partners, with weapons, funding and humanitarian aid. We will continue to provide these in response to requests from the Ukrainian Government. [We have provided £220 million in humanitarian aid](#). To date we have also sent over 90,000 ration packs, over 10 pallets of medical equipment, more than 3,000 pieces of body armour, over 80,000 helmets and much more including communications equipment. We have also provided anti-tank missiles, Air Defence systems, and anti-structure munitions.

On 3 May, [the UK announced that we will be providing a new package of military aid worth £300 million](#), to support Ukraine's ongoing defence against Russia's illegal invasion. The package includes electronic warfare equipment, a counter battery radar system, GPS jamming equipment and thousands of night vision devices.

[We are also sending a fleet of protective armoured vehicles to Ukraine](#), to safely evacuate civilians from shelled areas in eastern Ukraine. The vehicles will also be used to transport officials from Ukrainian ministries to temporary command posts set up for government work and the rebuilding of key infrastructure, such as energy supplies, in besieged areas. The Ukrainian police and the National Guard will also utilise the fleet to rebuild vital railway lines in the east of Ukraine.

Mr Chair, We provide this support because Ukraine's victory is a strategic imperative for all of us. Our collective security is under threat by Russia's actions. And we will continue to support Ukraine until we have achieved our long-term goal: to ensure that no-one will ever dare to attack it again.

[In the words my Prime Minister used when speaking to Ukraine's Parliament earlier this week](#), this is about Ukrainian democracy against President Putin's tyranny. It is about freedom versus oppression. It is also about right versus wrong. And that is why Ukraine must win.

Thank you. I kindly request that you attach this statement to the journal of the day.

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# Government announces special Queen's Platinum Jubilee Volunteering Award

- A special one-off addition to the annual Queen's Award for Voluntary Service created in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Government has today announced a special one-off addition to the annual Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS), in honour of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Her Majesty has displayed a life-long commitment to public service throughout her 70-year reign, and the annual QAVS is the highest award given to small volunteer groups across the UK. Awardees cover a wide range of activities such as dementia support clubs, community theatres and therapeutic garden projects.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award for Volunteering will now shine a spotlight on 20 national charities working to empower young people aged 16-25. The number 20 has been chosen to reflect 20 years of QAVS.

A special judging panel has been convened for the award, comprising civil society sector experts and youth representatives including Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Fionnuala Jay O'Boyle and Ndidi Okezie.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

Since The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service was set up 20 years ago to commemorate the Golden Jubilee, thousands of hard working local volunteer groups across the UK have been recognised for benefiting their communities.

We're delighted to be extending our recognition this year to some outstanding national charities through this special Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award for Volunteering.

We want to celebrate the important work done by national charities to empower young people with the skills they need to develop and grow. This is a fitting way to recognise the 70 years of selfless service Her Majesty has given to this country.

Sir Martyn Lewis CBE, the QAVS Chair said:

Her Majesty's faithful service to the nation over 70 years has been an inspiration to us all and is mirrored by countless acts of volunteering happening each day across the UK.

For this special Jubilee Award we are looking forward to celebrating outstanding work with young people, helping them to flourish and be the best they can be. It's a theme that's important to all of us and is close to Her Majesty's heart.

The Platinum Jubilee Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is [now open for applications](#) until 17 June. Nationally registered charities helping young people (aged 16-25), who have had a national impact either on a UK-wide, or England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland basis are invited to apply.

A judging panel including sector experts and young people will select 20 winners to be announced in The Gazette in October. Winners will be presented with this special award at a ceremony in November.

Recent QAVS winners include:

[Small Acts of Kindness](#) who provide practical gift bags to lonely and socially isolated older people in Hertfordshire and signpost them to support services.

[Equation](#) in Nottingham who deliver projects in schools and the community to help prevent domestic abuse and encourage healthy relationships.

[Gurnos Men's Project](#) in Glamorgan who get disengaged young men involved in community volunteering and horticulture, as well as helping them improve core skills.

[Second Wave Centre](#) for Youth Arts in London who run creative projects with young people and work with them to explore key issues such as knife crime and grooming.

[Friends of M.V. Freedom](#) in Dorset who take disabled people out to sea on a specially adapted boat.

[Via Wings](#) in County Down who provide a wide range of support to those in need, including a food bank, teenage supper club, homework support, learning, and counselling.

[Westhill & District Men's Shed](#) in Aberdeenshire where socially isolated men can share skills, make friends and work together on repairing/refurbishing projects for the community.

## Notes:

Nominations for the 2023 QAVS awards are [now open](#) until 15 September 2022.

[More information and an application form](#)

[More information on the main QAVS award](#)

The awardees for the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2022 will be announced on 2 June.