

Commission suspends sanctioned trustee of World Holocaust Forum Foundation

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened an inquiry into the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, after one of its trustees, Dr Viatcheslav Kantor was sanctioned by the UK government.



The Commission has already taken regulatory action to suspend Dr Kantor as a trustee and to prevent the trustees from parting with any of the charity's property without the Commission's prior consent.

The World Holocaust Forum Foundation (1194512), was registered in May 2021 with charitable aims to advance the education of the public in relation to the Holocaust.

On 6 April 2022, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office sanctioned Dr Kantor under the UK's Russia Sanctions regime, meaning he is now subject to a full asset freeze and his name appears on the 'UK Sanctions List' as a designated person.

The Commission's position is that individuals subject to UK financial sanctions cannot discharge their duties as a trustee of a charity.

The Commission has opened an inquiry on 13 April 2022 to:

1. Determine whether the charity can continue to operate and is viable following sanctions being imposed on Dr Kantor;
2. Consider the conduct of the trustees and whether they have discharged their legal duties and responsibilities in their management and administration of the charity.

The scope of the inquiry can be added to or amended if additional issues emerge.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Commission has also opened an investigation into the [Kantor Foundation](#) (1173549) and [Kantor Charitable Foundation](#) (1173550) due to Dr Kantor's role in them.
2. On 6 April 2022, Dr Kantor was named by Her Majesty's Treasury ('HMT') as a 'designated person' for the purposes of the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.
3. The effect of designation with an asset freeze by the UK government, means it is prohibited to deal with the frozen funds or economic resources, belonging to or owned, held or controlled by a designated person. It is also prohibited to make funds or economic resources available, directly or indirectly, to, or for the benefit of, a designated person. Matters relating to sanctions should be directed at the [Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation](#).
4. It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries are available on GOV.UK](#).
5. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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[PM statement at press conference with Prime Minister Modi: 22 April 2022](#)

My friend, Prime Minister Modi, Narendra, my khaas dost – is the phrase I wanted in Hindi

We've had a fantastic two days in India

And yesterday I became the first Conservative British Prime Minister to visit Gujarat, your birthplace of course, Narendra,

but, as you just said, the ancestral home of around half of all British Indians.

And I had an amazing reception – absolutely amazing– I felt like Sachin Tendulkar – my face was about as ubiquitous everywhere as Amitabh Bachchan.

I was everywhere to be seen and it was fantastic.

And this morning we've had wonderful talks and I think that they have strengthened our relationship in every way.

In challenging times it is very important that we – the khaas dost – get closer together

and I believe the partnership between Britain and India – one the oldest democracies – Britain is one of the oldest and India certainly the largest democracy is one of the defining friendships of our times.

What we're doing is taking forward an ambitious ten-year roadmap for British-Indian relations, that we agreed last year.

It was great to see you at the G7.

But since then, the threats of autocratic coercion have grown even further and it's therefore vital that we deepen our co-operation,

including our shared interest in keeping the Indo-Pacific open and free.

So today we've agreed a new and expanded Defence and Security Partnership, a decades-long commitment

that will not only forge tighter bonds between us,

but support your goal, Narendra of "Make in India".

The UK is creating an India-specific Open General Export License,

reducing bureaucracy and slashing delivering times for defence procurement.

We've agreed to work together to meet new threats across land, sea, air, space and cyber, including partnering on new fighter jet technology,

maritime technologies to detect and respond to threats in the oceans.

We're extending our partnership as science superpowers,

And building on the collaboration between Oxford/Astra-Zeneca and the Serum Institute,

which vaccinated more than a billion people against Covid, – including me – I have the Indian jab in my arm and the power of good it did me so thanks to India

And that has helped India to become what Narendra has called the pharmacy to the world.

Today we are embarking on joint initiatives on malaria vaccines,

On antimicrobial resistance, and a digital partnership between the Indian National Health Authority and our NHS.

We're also taking big steps together on energy security, helping each other to reduce our dependence on imported hydrocarbons – and adopt cheaper, more sustainable home-grown alternatives.

We have a new offer, a new plan to develop offshore wind from the Celtic Sea to Dhanushkodi we've got a new UK-India Hydrogen Science and Innovation Hub, and we're taking forward the green grids solar power initiative that you and I began, Narendra, at COP26 in Glasgow, together with 80 other countries.

It's an incredible fact that the sun provides enough energy every day to power the world ten thousand times over, you have a lot of solar power here in India – the sun putting in a fantastic performance today and we have quite a lot in Britain as well.

These partnerships form the superstructure of the Living Bridge that Narendra describes between our countries, and today that bridge is humming with goods and services and people and capital, whizzing back and forth east to west

and sometimes it can be hard to tell whether something is British, or Indian or frankly Brindian.

On Wednesday I went to the airport in a Range Rover – Indian-owned, but made in Britain.

And when I arrived here on Thursday, I visited JCB,

British-owned, but made in India. Exporting 60,000 every year around the world, 110 countries.

Or take the example of the Norton Motorbike now being revived in Britain by an Indian company.

I'm very pleased that this visit has not only deepened our economic partnership.

We've agreed new deals worth £1 billion,

and created more than 11,000 new jobs across the UK,

in everything from electric buses to the robotic surgery of Smith and Nephew which I saw yesterday

as well as in artificial intelligence, where India's strengths are remarkable.

And perhaps most significantly for the long term, we are making full use of the freedom that we now have

to reach a Free Trade Agreement,

a deal where you can lift those tariffs – you can, India, Narendra, on our machinery and apples – actually you've already done it on apples so thank you for the apples

and we in turn, we can lift the tariffs on your rice and textiles.

We've already closed four chapters,

and today we're announcing new measures to make it easier to export UK-made medical devices to India

and ensure mutual recognition of UK higher education qualifications.

And as the next round of talks begins here next week,

we are telling our negotiators: get it done by Diwali in October. Get it done by Diwali.

This could double our trade and investment by the end of the decade

widening that living bridge into a multi-lane motorway – pulsating with beautiful jointly made electric vehicles and creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs in both our countries.

So as India celebrates its 75th year of independence,

I am filled with optimism about the years ahead and the depth of the friendship between our countries, and the security and prosperity that our partnership can deliver for our people for generations to come.

Devastation caused by Russia's war: UK statement to the OSCE

Thank you, Mr Chair. Since 24 February, the world has witnessed the devastation stemming from President Putin's war throughout Ukraine. Thousands of civilians have been killed. Millions have been left in need of humanitarian assistance. 25% of Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes. Hospitals, schools and other critical infrastructure have been bombed, targeting the most vulnerable.

As Russia begins a new offensive in eastern Ukraine, civilians will continue to suffer. This includes in Mariupol which, prior to the invasion, had a population of over 400,000 – hundreds of thousands of whom were Russian speakers – and was a centre for Ukraine's grain trade and heavy engineering. Russia's efforts to capture the city have already come at horrifying costs to its residents. The Mayor of Mariupol has estimated that more than 20,000 civilians may have been killed in the city since the start of the invasion, whilst large areas of infrastructure have been destroyed. Many Ukrainians have been forcibly deported – against their will – to Russia or to Russian-controlled regions of Ukraine. And there are shocking accounts of civilians – men, women and children – deprived of access to food, water and medical

supplies. How can Russia attempt to justify this? The UK joins the call for an urgent humanitarian pause to allow assistance to reach civilians in the hardest-hit areas and for civilians to be allowed to evacuate safely and freely.

In the face of this enormous suffering, the Russian Government has continued to perpetuate their blatant lies and to deny responsibility for these deaths. They repeatedly said they would not target civilian infrastructure, but they have remorselessly attacked residential areas, schools and hospitals. They said they would not harm civilians. Yet we are seeing strong evidence that war crimes against the civilian population may have been committed, including as documented in the OSCE Moscow Mechanism report which we discussed in this Council last week.

Not content with spreading disinformation, the Russian government has also attempted to tamper with the efforts of those who report the truth, including through their refusal to extend the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission. And now we have received alarming reports that Russia's proxies in Donbas are threatening Mission staff, equipment and premises and that Russian forces have taken SMM staff members captive. We condemn these threats to this Mission and its dedicated personnel in the strongest possible terms. We call for the release of SMM staff members, as well as all Ukrainians detained by Russia.

Let us be clear: the world sees through the Kremlin's lies. The true extent of Russia's actions in Mariupol, and in the rest of Ukraine, is yet to be revealed, but there should be no doubt that justice will be sought for these and for future violations of Russia's obligations under the international laws that they freely signed up to, including the Helsinki Final Act. Those guilty of atrocities must be held to account. The Kremlin must be held responsible for its actions. The Moscow Mechanism report, as the first independent report under the auspices of an international organisation, was important in confirming our fears. We will make every effort to support the ICC investigation into potential war crimes in Ukraine currently underway, as well as other international investigations as appropriate.

Mr Chair, we will continue to use all the tools available to ensure that President Putin fails in his unprovoked, premediated and unjustified war. Yesterday we announced new sanctions on key leaders in Russia's army – targeting those commanding the front line to commit heinous acts – and individuals outside of Putin's military who are actively supporting his illegal invasion of Ukraine. On 13 April, we announced sanctions on 178 individuals – in coordination with the European Union – targeting those who prop up Russian-backed illegal breakaway regions of Ukraine. In addition, on 14 April the UK banned the export of key oil refining equipment and catalysts, degrading Russia's ability to extract and export oil products.

We will also continue to help Ukraine to defend itself. The UK has increased military support of lethal and non-lethal aid, bringing the total so far to £450m. We will continue to provide more defensive equipment, in response to requests from the Ukrainian Government to defend their sovereignty, including providing training when it is required on the equipment that we have provided

to the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Mr Chair, Ukraine is fighting for the right of its citizens to live peacefully in its own territory. The UK stands with Ukraine and will always defend the Ukrainian people's right to choose their own destiny. We are working with our international partners to find a long-term security solution so that Ukraine could never be attacked in this way again. Ukraine deserves peace.

Thank you, Mr Chair. And I kindly request that you attach this statement to the journal of the day.

[Ashgabat hosts Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee celebrations: speech by Ambassador](#)

Good evening guests, friends and colleagues! Welcome to those observing Ramadan. And a special welcome to our Guest of Honour, Mr Muhammetgeldi Serdarov, Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan. You are very welcome.

A particular warm welcome to those in the room tonight who have made the effort to join us despite the humanitarian crisis affecting their families, friends and homes in Ukraine – our thoughts are with you and thank you for joining us. The UK will continue to stand with you against the violence and aggression you are facing and hold those responsible to account.

Thank you for joining us today as we celebrate three important events. First, we are celebrating Her Majesty the Queen's 96th birthday. Second, we are celebrating Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. And third, we are celebrating 30 years of diplomatic relations between the UK and Turkmenistan. This follows Turkmenistan's celebration of 30 years of independence last year.

I'm delighted to say that tonight we are all at the first Queen's Birthday Party event in Central Asia for almost three years and at one of the first, if not the first, Queen's Birthday Party events anywhere in the world in this Jubilee year.

I'd like to start by saying a few words in honour of Her Majesty the Queen. She was born in April 1926, meaning she turns 96 next week and she was crowned Queen in 1952, meaning this year she marks 70 years on the throne. These 70 years have brought many opportunities and many challenges. When she became Queen, the world had just emerged from a global conflict and was led

by figures including Churchill, Truman and Stalin.

During her reign, 14 British Prime Ministers and 14 US Presidents have taken office. During her reign, the world has witnessed the birth of space travel, the fall of the Berlin wall, the invention of mobile phones and the internet, world population rising from 2.5 to 8 billion people, the ending of some global health threats and the emerging of new ones and the certainty that serious action is needed to eliminate the existential threat of climate change.

Throughout Her Majesty has been a symbol of stability and continuity in a changing world. She has lived and worked by principles of service, duty and hard work, principles which those of us in public service strive to emulate. She is, quite rightly, taking on lighter duties at almost 96, something which I think we would all agree she deserves! I am glad you have been able to join us to mark both her birthday and her Jubilee.

We are also here tonight to celebrate 30 years of diplomatic relations between the UK and Turkmenistan.

The UK and Turkmenistan's business and economy links have been a major part of our relationship over these 30 years. Our relationship is always developing and innovating. These days our focus is on the green economy.

When I met His Excellency Foreign Minister Mr Meredov in January, he asked the UK to be 'practical and active'. And so we have been. We are working actively to build links in the green economy – in hydrogen, in solar, in wind, in emissions capture and in more efficient use of water resources.

Practical and active defines our relationship. Shared principles also define our relationship. Both countries are strong supporters of the UN system. Both countries regularly express support for the principles of sovereignty and the importance of international law. Both countries have set out how investment in women and girls and in education will help create a better future for everyone.

That better future for everyone depends on us tackling climate change – together. In the UK we are experiencing climate change in yes – even more rain and yes – even heatwaves. Here in Turkmenistan hotter and drier summers, are making life more difficult for people, plants and animals. The UK will remain a steadfast partner of Turkmenistan in its work to tackle the causes and effects of climate change. And of course the UK was pleased to host His Excellency Mr Serdar Berdimuhamedov, now President, at the Glasgow Climate Change summit last November.

I would now like to turn to some thanks.

Many people who have worked very hard to put this Birthday Party on for you today.

I would ask you to put your hands together at the end of my speech for them.

Thank you to the wonderful work of the British Embassy team, all of whom have worked together to make tonight happen. You have done us proud.

Thank you to our sponsors, JCB, for supporting us to hold this event.

Thank you to Hypervision for providing the holograms.

Thank you to the Yyldyz team for looking after us tonight.

And thank you to the orchestra, conducted by Mr Rasul Klychev with Maysa Niyazova who are playing a great selection of British – as well as international – music.

Finally, let me propose two toasts.

I propose a toast to the health and success of the President, Government and People of Turkmenistan!

I propose a toast to the health and happiness of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II!

Thank you for your attention and now I would like to invite our guest of honour, His Excellency Mr Muhammetgeldi Serdarov, Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan to say a few words.

[Offshore drilling merger raises competition concerns](#)

Press release

The CMA has found that the merger of Noble and Maersk Drilling could increase operating costs for oil and gas producers in the UK North Sea.



In February, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) opened an investigation into the approximately £2.6 billion anticipated merger between

Maersk Drilling and Noble Corporation.

Noble and Maersk Drilling are both globally active offshore drilling contractors for the oil and gas industry. The CMA's investigation primarily focussed on the two businesses' overlapping activities in the supply of a certain type of platform, known as a 'jack-up' rig, commonly used for offshore drilling by UK customers in the North Sea.

Following its Phase 1 investigation, the CMA has found the deal raises competition concerns in the supply of jack-up rigs for offshore drilling in North West Europe (the area comprising the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands). The merging businesses are two of the four main suppliers in this market and have frequently competed against each other for contracts in the past. The CMA is concerned that the combined businesses would not face sufficient competition after the merger, which could lead to higher prices and lower quality services for oil and gas producers in the North Sea.

If the merging businesses are unable to address the CMA's concerns, the deal will be referred for an in-depth Phase 2 investigation, to be carried out by a group of independent CMA panel members.

Colin Raftery, Senior Director of Mergers at the CMA, said:

Offshore drilling services are critical for oil and gas producers. Our investigation showed that Noble and Maersk have competed closely in the past and face only limited competition.

We're therefore concerned that the loss of competition that this deal would bring about could result in higher prices or lower quality services, increasing operating costs for oil and gas producers in the UK North Sea.

Noble and Maersk Drilling have 5 working days to offer proposals to the CMA to address the competition concerns identified. The CMA would then have a further 5 working days to consider whether to accept these in principle instead of referring the case to a Phase 2 investigation.

For more information, visit the [Noble Corporation / Maersk Drilling merger inquiry page](#).

1. On 23 February, the CMA gave notice under section 96(2A) of the Enterprise Act 2002 that the merger notice provided by Noble Corporation (Noble) and The Drilling Company of 1972 A/S (Maersk Drilling) in relation to the anticipated merger between both companies meets the requirements of section 96(2) of the Act.
2. All media enquiries should be directed to the CMA press office by email on press@cma.gov.uk, or by phone on 020 3738 6460.

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