

An opportunity to adapt UNMIK to serve current conditions in Kosovo: UK at the UN Security Council

Let me begin by congratulating Special Representative Ziadeh on her appointment, and thank her for her briefing. We welcome the opportunity new leadership provides for an improved relationship with the Kosovo government, and a fresh look at how UNMIK can adapt to serve the current conditions in Kosovo.

We encourage continued constructive engagement between the new SRSB, UNMIK and the Kosovo government. UNMIK has played a vital role in the incredible progress Kosovo has made since resolution 1244 was adopted in 1999. But conditions on the ground are unrecognisable from 1999, and a review of UNMIK's role and responsibilities is needed.

Kosovo's democracy and institutions continue to show their maturity. In this context, we must condemn last weekend's violent attacks against the Kosovo Police, who represent and protect all of Kosovo's citizens.

We congratulate the current government of Kosovo on its first year in office. In particular, we welcome:

the renewed commitment to prioritising the rule of law and fighting corruption, including through legal reforms and anti-corruption initiatives;

the government's continuing commitment to addressing the legacies of the 1998/99 conflict, including through commissions for missing persons and victims of sexual violence; and

Kosovo's ongoing international contribution, through its support to the evacuation from Kabul, and the humanitarian response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

We note, however, perceptions in some quarters that the Kosovo Serb community's concerns and views sometimes go unheard. The recent decision on voting in Kosovo, in Serbia's elections, is an example. We encourage the government to refocus its efforts to meet its Constitutional duty to integrate minority communities and address their concerns.

We are concerned by the increase of dangerous rhetoric in Kosovo and the region leading to security incidents. The deployment of fighter jets to the Kosovan border in September is an example of this.

Reports of the United Kingdom supplying anti-tank missiles, referred to by the Russian Federation, are baseless. But to be clear, the UK supports Kosovo's right to develop its own armed forces.

Finally, I would like to emphasise the UK's renewed commitment to peace and

security in the region, including through our Prime Minister's appointment of a Special Envoy to the Western Balkans, Sir Stuart Peach.

We fully support the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo under EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajcak. Now is the moment for both parties to engage in the Dialogue in good faith, honour their Dialogue commitments, be open to compromise and creativity, and avoid actions or rhetoric that could reduce prospects for a comprehensive and sustainable normalisation agreement that benefits the people of both countries.

UK calls for full implementation of UN mandate to improve the lives of citizens in Abyei: UK Statement at the UN Security Council

Let me begin by thanking our briefers, Mr Lacroix and Ms Tetteh, and in particular, wishing Ms Tetteh all the best in her new role. I also welcome the presence of Representatives of Sudan and South Sudan, and I commend the two countries for their improved bilateral engagement, including the mutual support for their respective peace processes.

The United Kingdom is encouraged by the latest joint session of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism and the Joint Border Commission, held in October.

But it is regrettable that such positive developments have not led to tangible progress for ordinary people in Abyei, or on agreeing a political solution for the region.

We therefore urge both countries to organise a further meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee and echo the Secretary-General's encouragement for the African Union to intensify its mediation efforts to help facilitate such efforts.

Turning to UNISFA, we are glad to see that the rotation of troops has almost concluded. We commend the dedication of Ethiopian peacekeepers in their work to support peace and security in Abyei over the last decade.

It is our hope that attention can now return to the full implementation of UNISFA's mandated tasks and improving the lives of citizens in Abyei, who continue to suffer.

To this end, we repeat our call on the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to remove the operational obstacles that limit UNISFA's ability to implement

its mandate in full.

We also remain concerned at the continued restriction of UNISFA's freedom of movement, including on vital border monitoring activities.

We call on both countries to remove restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNISFA, and urge the Government of South Sudan to allow the re-operationalisation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism Headquarters in Gok Machar.

We also join our fellow Council Members in expressing concern over the two armed attacks on UNISFA forces during the reporting period.

The safety and security of UN peacekeepers is vital and we echo the Secretary-General's call for the relevant authorities to investigate and hold those responsible to account.

Lastly, we would like to express deep concern at the outbreak of violence in Agok, during which two humanitarian workers were killed and activities suspended.

The United Kingdom urges all parties to fully respect International Humanitarian Law and allow humanitarian actors to deliver aid to those in need in all parts of Abyei, without hindrance.

Chancellor rallies further economic support for Ukraine during IMF Meetings

- Chancellor reiterates UK's unwavering support for Ukraine during discussions with global counterparts at International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings in Washington D.C.
- Rishi Sunak also held talks with Ukrainian Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko and called on partners to "go further and faster" in their support for the war-torn country.
- In response to global inflation and supply chain issues Chancellor also urged counterparts to continue their co-ordinated action to support shared cost of living challenges.

Rishi Sunak held a series of meetings with partners from the G7 and G20

during the trip – where he discussed the ongoing response to the war along with the resulting inflationary and supply chain challenges faced by economies across the globe.

He also held talks with Ukrainian Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko and reiterated the UK's unwavering support for the war-torn country's people and economy – committing to continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with them in their hour of need.

It came after representatives from the UK left the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting alongside US and Canadian allies in protest against the war as the Russian delegates spoke.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

The UK is unwavering in our support to the people of Ukraine and has committed to make over \$2bn of financial, humanitarian and military assistance available to Ukraine.

I urge all likeminded international colleagues to step up, deliver and go further and faster in their economic and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine.

As finance Ministers we face common challenges – a global supply squeeze, rising prices, and the cost of Putin's aggression.

It's more important than ever that we coordinate our efforts to minimise the impacts on ordinary people at home.

Speaking during the IMF Committee meeting on Thursday morning, Rishi Sunak announced his aim to channel \$2.5 billion worth of Special Drawing Rights, an international reserve asset (equivalent to £2.6 billion) to the IMF's newly established Resilience and Sustainability Trust (RST), and urged others to also step up in providing resources to ensure the RST is up and running by the IMF Annual Meetings later this year.

The RST fills a crucial gap in the IMF's toolkit, providing affordable long-term financing to low income countries and vulnerable middle income countries to address challenges such as climate change, energy security and pandemic preparedness. It will play a vital role in providing financing to combat climate change and bolster energy security, including for Ukraine and other countries worst affected by the war.

The Chancellor also announced the UK will impose further bans and tariffs on Russian imports. Over the coming weeks, the UK will ban additional Russian goods from reaching UK shores, including wood and glass, and will also be imposing tariffs on additional products, such as diamonds and rubber. With these new measures, the UK will be imposing import restrictions on Russian goods worth over £1 billion.

During the two-day series of meetings, G7 Finance Ministers also acknowledged

the war against Ukraine is causing severe disruption to the global economy – impacting inflation and the cost of living at home. Mr Sunak called on his international partners to work together to monitor these global pressures and pushed his partners to take co-ordinated global action where possible to support the resilience of our economies.

Further information

- Whilst in Washington DC, the Chancellor on Wednesday 20 April:
 - o Had a bilateral with Serhiy Marchenko, Minister of Finance of Ukraine
 - o Attended the G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting
 - o Attended a G7 Finance Ministers Dinner, hosted by Janet Yellen as the US Treasury
- And on Thursday 21 April:
 - o Spoke in the IMF Committee Plenary
 - o Met with a series of International counterparts including, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, Chrystia Freeland, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, Lawrence Wong, Minister of Finance, Singapore, Paulo Guedes, Minister of Finance, Brazil, Sri Mulyani, Minister of Finance, Indonesia and Deputy Managing Director of the IMF, Gita Gopinath
- The UK's total over \$2 billion support package for Ukraine is broken into
 - o Around \$500 million in economic and humanitarian grant support for Ukraine. This comprises: a £220 million (c.\$290m) package of humanitarian aid, making the UK a leading bilateral humanitarian donor; a c.£75m (\$100m) fiscal support grant, channelled through the World Bank Trust Fund; a £100 million (c.\$130m) grant to support Ukraine's energy security and reforms,
 - o Almost \$1 billion in guarantees on World Bank lending to Ukraine, unlocking additional WB financing on a 1:1 basis over the coming months. These financial guarantees are subject to parliamentary approval.
 - o Over £450 million (c.\$590m) in lethal and non-lethal military aid, including thousands of anti-tank weapons
- The Special Drawing Right (SDR) is an international reserve asset created by the IMF to supplement other reserve assets of member countries.
- A flagship UK policy priority during the UK G7 presidency, the Resilience and Sustainability Trust is an IMF mechanism to provide finance to low income and vulnerable middle-income countries to build economic resilience and ensure a sustainable economic recovery. It was

established last week to aid vulnerable countries with long term structural challenges, and will become operational by Autumn this year, and the UK will look to agree with the IMF the delivery details of the Chancellor's aim to channel over £2.5bn in the coming months.

- Please see more details on the latest import sanctions announcement [here](#).

[M54 to M6 Link Road development consent decision announced](#)

Press release

Today, 21 April 2022, the application for the M54 to M6 Link Road has been granted development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport.



The application was to develop a link road between Junction 1 of the M54 and Junction 11 of the M6. The M54 to M6 Link Road aims to reduce congestion on local / regional routes, particularly the A460 and A449.

The scheme will include:

- a new link road of approximately 2.5km (1.6 miles) in length between the M54 Junction 1 and the M6 Junction 11
- a new junction at M54 junction 1 to provide direct links to and from the M54 and the new link road, and to maintain the connections to the local road network
- realignment of Hilton Lane over the new link road
- a new junction at M6 Junction 11 with junction capacity improvements and changes proposed to Mill Lane

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Highways England on 31 January 2020 and accepted for Examination on 28

February 2020.

Following Examinations during which the public, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, recommendations were made to the Secretary of State on 21 July 2021.

This is the 110th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and 38th transport application to have been examined by The Planning Inspectorate within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

The Planning Inspectorate has now examined more than 100 nationally significant infrastructure projects since the Planning Act 2008 process was introduced, ensuring local communities have had the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them.

This Examination took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions, and the Examining Authority worked hard to ensure that local people, the local authority and other Interested Parties were able to fully participate.

The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views and the evidence gathered during the examination before making their recommendation.

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation are publicly available on the [project pages of the National Infrastructure Planning website](#)

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate's [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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Work on Lower Otter's new embankment and bridge starts next week

- The bridge and embankment will be constructed above the height of the existing floodplain
- It will provide access to a more resilient road in times of flooding

Building of the new road embankment and a 30 metre-span bridge, to carry vehicles over the new creek network on the west of the Lower Otter valley in Budleigh Salterton, enters a new phase next week.

The concrete foundation piles for the bridge are now complete and building upwards will begin. This includes the construction of the piers and supports of the bridge (abutments) and the earth embankment for the road itself which will go across the valley parallel to the existing road.

The embankment will eventually be 2.5 metres higher than the current South Farm Road – the same level as the nearby White Bridge – lifting it above the level of the floodplain.

Dan Boswell, Lower Otter Restoration Project manager for the Environment Agency, said:

This is a fascinating opportunity to see civil engineering in action. Although it will look very big initially, after about 4 months the surcharged embankment will be re-shaped and reduced in height before the final road surfacing is constructed.

Towards the end of the year, the new embankment will be connected to White Bridge before it crosses the River Otter – White Bridge will remain unchanged. To minimise disruption while the new road is being built and connected, later this year a short section of temporary private road providing access to the east of the river will be built. The new bridge is expected to be complete during the autumn.

The project is part of the €26 million Promoting Adaptation to Changing Coasts project, which also has a similar scheme underway in the Saône Valley in Normandy, France. In Devon it will see current grassland, created during historic reclamation work, replaced with 55 hectares of intertidal mudflat and saltmarsh, plus a net gain of more than 2 hectares of broadleaved woodland and 1.5 kilometres of hedgerow.

Building the embankment involves temporarily 'over-building' or 'surcharging' the structure to around 4.5 metres (an extra 2 metres) in order to compress the underlying ground to ensure that the material under the new road is sufficiently strong to carry it.

The French arm of the project is in the Saône Valley in Normandy and includes building a new water treatment works and moving a campsite at Quiberville.

It is thought that up to 70 estuarine sites in northern France and southern England may benefit from the PACCo project, by following the model being used on the Lower Otter and Saône Valley. A "how to" guide is being developed as part of the project to help organisations decide if a similar scheme would benefit their areas.

The European Regional Development Fund is providing funding via the Interreg VA France (Channel) England programme.