

Creative Earth competition in Ashgabat: winners announced

World news story

The British Embassy's Creative Earth competition for young people to paint a picture of the climate-friendly world they'd like to live in generated a fantastic and unprecedented number of entries.



We received almost two hundred pictures that were of an incredibly high standard and that really challenged the judges to select the ultimate winners.

On the evening of 14 April, during the celebration of Her Majesty's birthday, British Ambassador Lucia Wilde presented prizes of tablet computers to the three lucky winners.

Damir Martynenko, age group: 6 to 8 years

8-year old Damir made a picture that shows a future planet powered by solar and wind and where recycling is king!

Arina Kandroman, age group: 9 to 12 years

Arina painted a picture that showed humour and creativity with the people of the world rolling a carpet of grass over a polluted landscape.

Olga Sidorenko, age group: 13 to 18 years

Olga painted with great technical skill and showed how green homes, farms and offices could co-exist.

The winning pictures and a small selection of others were on display at Her

Majesty's Birthday Party on 14 April. We look forward to displaying the pictures at other Embassy events throughout the year as we continue to commemorate the rich 30 years of UK's relationship with Turkmenistan.

Published 21 April 2022

[Andy Start appointed as DE&S Chief Executive](#)

Andy will replace Sir Simon Bollom who has served as the DE&S CEO since 2018.

DE&S is an arm's length body of the MOD responsible for providing equipment and support to the UK's Armed Forces.

Andy will take on this significant role within the Defence community having been CEO of Capita Public Service, one of the largest strategic suppliers to UK government, where he currently leads a team of over 12,000 staff.

He spent the first decade of his career working in the space sector as a designer and programme manager of military satellite systems, followed by leading a wide range of aerospace and defence businesses, with a specialism in helping improve performance and drive strategic change.

Incoming DE&S CEO, Andy Start said:

I am delighted and honoured to be taking on this key role in Government. DE&S plays a major part in keeping the UK secure and maintaining some of the nation's key industrial and technological skills. There can be few more interesting, more meaningful, or more challenging leadership opportunities.

I'd like to thank Sir Simon Bollom for his extensive work in leading DE&S and setting a clear and deliverable strategy for the future. I look forward to working with DE&S staff, and the wider Defence sector, to drive this forward.

Andy has already previously taken responsibility for leading the UK Aerospace Innovation & Growth Team and supported the development of Defence Industrial Policy.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Jeremy Quin said:

I'm pleased to welcome Andy Start to the role of CEO at Defence

Equipment and Support. At an extremely important time in UK Defence, I am pleased that DE&S will be led by a CEO with extensive commercial experience who can take forward the work of Sir Simon Bollom.

Sir Simon, who has led the organisation over the last four years, has consistently been a tireless exemplar of public service leadership and driven DE&S forward. I wish him the very best for the future.

MOD Permanent Secretary, David Williams said:

Andy's appointment is great news for both DE&S and MOD as we look to navigate a critical time in UK Defence. He brings a wealth of expertise from 25 years in senior leadership roles in Defence industry, and I know he has the vision and ambition to lead DE&S into the future.

I would also like to thank Sir Simon Bollom for his leadership of DE&S and commitment to Defence over the last four years and across his career. I wish him all the very best for the future.

The competition for Sir Simon's position was launched in late 2021, attracting strong interest. Over 50 individuals applied and, as with all senior civil service appointments, fair and open competition was ensured, with recruitment of the role being overseen by the Civil Service Commissioner.

[New sanctions targeting Putin's war Leaders](#)

- sanctions target both the Generals committing atrocities on the front line, as well as individuals and businesses supporting Putin's military
- intelligence reveals intentional bombing of critical and civilian infrastructure in Mariupol

Following Putin's renewed assault in Donetsk and Luhansk, and intelligence which reveals intentional bombing of critical and civilian infrastructure in Mariupol, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has today (Thursday 21 April) announced a new wave of 26 sanctions – targeting defence actors.

Since 10 March 2022, Russian bombers have repeatedly dropped munitions on civilian infrastructure, including civil government buildings, hospitals, schools and transportation nodes. The UK government conclusion is that this

is intentional targeting based on the types of civilian targets struck, frequency of strikes, volume of munitions and the repeated targeting of the same locations on consecutive days.

In response to the continued war of aggression in Ukraine, the UK government is imposing new sanctions on key leaders in Russia's army – targeting those commanding the front line to commit these heinous acts. They are:

- Lt Colonel Azatbek Omurbekov, a Commanding Officer in the Russian Army with involvement in the 'Bucha massacre'
- Colonel General Andrey Serdyukov, Commander of Airborne Forces
- Major General Valery Flyustikov, Commander of Special Operations Forces
- Colonel General Nikolay Bogdanovsky, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff

Today's round of sanctions also targets individuals outside of Putin's military who are actively supporting his illegal invasion of Ukraine. These include Oleg Belozyorov, the CEO and Chairman of vital logistics company Russian Railways, and Ilya Kiva, the defecting and expelled Ukrainian MP who has publicly supported Russia's actions in Ukraine.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The depravity of Russia's assault on the people of Ukraine is plain for all to see. They are deliberately targeting hospitals, schools, and transport hubs in Mariupol and beyond – just as they did in Chechnya and Syria.

The UK is unyielding in our support for Ukraine and in holding Putin and his regime to account. Today's new wave of sanctions hits the generals and defence companies that have blood on their hands.

As part of today's wave of sanctions, the UK is also fast-tracking a further 19 individuals and entities in alignment with global partners from the G7 and the EU. These additional sanctions are all linked to Russia's military and defence capabilities as the UK and allies use sanctions to hamstring Putin's current and future military efforts. Notable individuals and entities that have been fast-tracked include:

- Sergei Borisovich Korolyov, the First Deputy Director of Federal Security Service of Russia
- Kalashnikov Concern, a Russian developer and manufacturer of army Russian equipment whose weapons have been used by Russian Armed forces during the invasion of Ukraine
- Arzamas Machine-Building Plant, who build amphibious armoured personnel carriers that have been used in the invasion of Ukraine
- Military Industrial Company, a major supplier of arms and military equipment to the Russian armed forces
- GTLK, Russia's largest leasing company which operates in different types of transport and special equipment for Russian companies in the transport industry

The UK government will continue to use sanctions to cripple Putin's siege economy, while supporting Ukraine's continued resistance. So far, the UK has sanctioned over £900 billion of global assets from banks, and sanctioned oligarchs and their families with a net worth of approximately £200 billion.

Individuals and entities sanctioned

Standard process:

- Anzhelika Khan, wife of UK-sanctioned oligarch German Khan. She is subject to an asset freeze
- Oleg Belozyorov, CEO and Board Chairman of Russian Railways, which is a key enabler for transporting Russian military equipment. Belozyorov is a Russian businessman with close ties to Putin. He is subject to a travel ban and asset freeze
- Ilya Kiva, expelled Ukrainian MP. Kiva has undermined the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine by supporting the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He is subject to a travel ban and asset freeze
- Lt Col Azatbek Omurbekov, the so-called 'Butcher of Bucha', is the Commanding Officer of the unit that occupied Bucha where there have been reports of war crimes with the death toll reaching almost 350. Omurbekov is subject to a travel ban and asset freeze
- Colonel General Andrey Serdyukov, Russian Commander Airborne Forces. Serdyukov is one of the six senior commanders responsible for overseeing the different districts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He also headed the operation of the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. Serdyukov is subject to a travel ban and asset freeze for undermining the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine
- Maj Gen Valery Flyustikov, Russian Commander Special Operations Forces. He is subject to a travel ban and asset freeze for undermining the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine
- Col Gen Nikolay Bogdanovsky, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff. Canada has already sanctioned this individual in 2014 due to Russian aggression against Ukraine. He is subject to a travel ban and asset freeze for undermining the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine

Fast-track process:

- Sergei Borisovich KOROLYOV, First Deputy Director of the Federal Security Service of Russia and therefore critical to Russia's security architecture. Canada has already sanctioned this individual due to his role in supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine
- GTLK, Russia's largest leasing company which operates in different types of transport and special equipment for Russian companies in the transport industry. GTLK carries out investment activities to develop Russia's transport infrastructure. The sole shareholder of this organisation is the Russian Federation represented by Russia's Ministry of Transport. The EU have already sanctioned this organisation due to GTLK financially supporting and benefitting from the Government of

Russia, which is responsible for the annexation of Crimea and the destabilisation of Ukraine

- JSC ARZ MACHINEBUILDING PLANT, part of a Military Industrial Company which manufactures the BTR-80 amphibious armoured personnel carriers, which were used by Russia during the illegal invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The EU has already sanctioned this organisation for its role in supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine
- JSC Kalashnikov Concern, a Russian developer and manufacturer of army Russian equipment, including personal rifles, missiles and vehicles. Vikhr- 1 guided aircraft missiles and AK-12 assault rifles produced by Kalaslikov Concern were used by the Russian Armed Forces during the illegal invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Both the EU and US have already sanctioned this organisation for its role in supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine
- LLC MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPANY, a major arms and military equipment provider to the Russian Armed Forces. It produces and sells wheeled and tracked all-terrain vehicles of various purposes. The EU has already sanctioned this organisation for its role in supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Background

Asset freeze

An asset freeze prevents any UK citizen, or any business in the UK, from dealing with any funds or economic resources which are owned, held or controlled by the designated person. UK financial sanctions apply to all persons within the territory and territorial sea of the UK and to all UK persons, wherever they are in the world. It also prevents funds or economic resources being provided to or for the benefit of the designated person.

Travel ban

A travel ban means that the designated person must be refused leave to enter or to remain in the United Kingdom, providing the individual is an excluded person under section 8B of the Immigration Act 1971.

Transport sanctions

Recently introduced powers make it a criminal offence for any Russian aircraft to fly or land in the UK, and give the government powers to remove aircraft belonging to designated Russian individuals and entities from the UK aircraft register, even if the sanctioned individual is not on board. Russian ships are also banned from UK ports.

Prototype Fast Reactor sodium tanks

News story

At approximately 8:00pm on 20 April, site emergency personnel responded to a call at the sodium storage tanks at the Prototype Fast Reactor complex.



A planned reaction of material inside a tank resulted in an excursion, causing the release of a small amount of caustic liquor.

No-one was injured and damage was confined to components in the tank. We believe the environmental impact is low. Emergency personnel kept the tank under observation as a precaution.

SEPA and ONR have been informed of the occurrence, and DSRL today is commencing its own investigation of the circumstances.

Published 21 April 2022

G7 Finance Minister and Central Bank Governors Statement on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

We, the G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, met in Washington D.C. on 20 April 2022 to discuss Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the tragic loss of life resulting from the war, as well as its global economic impact.

We are united in our resolve to restore peace and stability and uphold international law as well as in our unwavering commitment to international

cooperation and multilateralism. We strongly condemn Russia's unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine, which is a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and international peace and security. This condemnation is shared by 141 countries at the United Nations and was emphasised by most G20 members this morning. Russia must immediately comply with the legally binding order of the International Court of Justice to suspend the military aggression that it commenced against Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Further, we urge Russia to withdraw completely its military forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We join our Leaders and Foreign Ministers in their statements of 7 April 2022 in condemning in the strongest terms the appalling atrocities perpetrated by Russian armed forces.

International organisations and multilateral fora should no longer conduct their activities with Russia in a business-as-usual manner. We will work closely with our partners to act as appropriate, based on shared interests, as well as rules and regulations of respective institutions. As such, we regret participation by Russia in international fora, including G20, International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings this week.

In the presence of Ukrainian Finance Minister Sergii Marchenko, we expressed our unwavering support for and heartfelt solidarity with the Ukrainian people and government. We continue to stand with Ukraine.

Building on the G7 Finance Ministers' statement of 14 February 2022, together with the international community we have provided and pledged considerable additional support exceeding 24 billion US dollars for 2022 and beyond, both in financial and material terms. This comes on top of the economic support provided since 2014 until 2021, which exceeds 60 billion US dollars. Against the background of the ongoing brutal Russian aggression, the accompanying suffering of the Ukrainian population, and the continued destruction of the country itself, we are prepared to do more as needed. It is also essential that we continue to closely coordinate our support to Ukraine and its neighbouring countries. We commend the international financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, for the provision of critical, urgent financial assistance to Ukraine. We call on all countries and international organisations to join our efforts to ensure adequate support for Ukraine in meeting its immediate needs and rebuilding its future. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the International Monetary Fund's Multi-Donor Administered Account for Ukraine and the European Union announcement to develop a Ukraine Solidarity Trust Fund. We support the World Bank Group's support package to Ukraine and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's Resilience Package.

We have acted in close coordination and alongside other partners to increase Russia's costs of its war by isolating Russia from the global economy. As evidenced by the G7 Leaders Statement of 7 April 2022, we continue to take coordinated action, including with our partners across the world, responding to the ongoing escalation to further raise the cost of this war for Russia. We will sustain and increase our coordinated pressure for as long as necessary and continue to urge other countries to support our efforts.

We imposed significant sanctions on Russia in direct response to its invasion of Ukraine and will fully implement and enforce the economic and financial measures taken as a result. Our sanctions are already having the intended massive impact on the Russian economy, which is likely to contract significantly this year. The Russian stock market has lost over a quarter of its value and had to remain shut for almost a month; hundreds of international companies are withdrawing from Russia and investment is drying up; inflation in Russia has increased; and Russian imports are declining with a knock-on impact on Russia's long-term growth prospects. The significant long-term hit to the Russian economy will become even clearer over time. We will continue to closely monitor the effects of sanctions. We will also continue to work closely together and with our partners to enforce our sanctions and prevent any attempts to evade, circumvent or backfill sanctions.

President Putin, his government and supporters, and the enabling Belarusian regime, bear full responsibility for the social and economic consequences of the war. We designed our sanctions in a targeted way to minimise harm for third countries and the global economy and we have excluded key agricultural products and humanitarian necessities from sanctions, ensuring the availability of food stuffs, medicines and medical devices as well as enabling telecommunication services to support the flow of information.

The multilateral Russian Elites, Proxies, and Oligarchs (REPO) Task Force has taken up its work to coordinate and support our action to find, restrain, freeze without delay and, where appropriate and possible, seize, confiscate or forfeit the assets and economic resources of those individuals and entities who have been sanctioned in connection with Russia's unjustified and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

All G7 economies have undertaken concrete steps to reduce imports of Russian energy supplies. We will continue to coordinate closely to enhance our energy security and to secure a stable and sustainable energy supply. This crisis reinforces our determination to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and of the Glasgow Climate Pact, including by accelerating the reduction of our overall reliance on fossil fuels and our transition to clean energy.

We are strongly committed to not conducting government-to-government financial transactions with Russia, including voluntary trading in Special Drawing Rights, and call upon other countries to join us in further limiting Russia's ability to finance its unprovoked and unjustifiable war of choice against Ukraine. Russia must not obtain financing from the international financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. We welcome the decision by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to suspend the access by Russia and Belarus to its resources.

We, together with like-minded partners, remain committed to addressing the economic challenges caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Russia's ruthless actions are causing substantial increases in commodity and food prices and are disrupting the global economy more broadly at a time when we were already facing the challenges of an uneven recovery, elevated levels of inflation and reduced policy space. The war is directly undermining

Ukraine's economy and ability to export, in particular agricultural products, is disrupting key supply chains and transport links and is impeding Russia's own exports. The longer Russia and those enabling Russia allow the aggression to continue, the higher the global economic cost will be.

The economic costs of Russia's military aggression will be felt disproportionately by vulnerable groups across all economies and particularly by the most vulnerable countries, given already elevated debt levels following the pandemic. Higher food prices as a result of the war are leading to rising food insecurity. A further tightening of global financial conditions could exacerbate financial vulnerabilities, particularly in emerging and developing economies.

We stand in solidarity with all those across the world who are having to bear the rising price of President Putin's war of choice against Ukraine. The global community has worked very hard to develop and maintain the global financial safety net. We support the use of all available instruments to the benefit of vulnerable countries that suffer from a crisis not of their own making. As requested by our Leaders, we will work with our partners to address the consequences of the current crisis on food security through a joint G7 effort. We call on the international financial institutions to urgently bolster support for food security and agricultural production and provide support to the most vulnerable countries. We are committed to addressing food insecurity, keeping markets open, and enhancing the resilience of the global economy, notably including agricultural and energy markets in line with climate and environmental goals. We are closely monitoring developments in global financial markets, including those for commodities, which have been volatile as a consequence of uncertainty created by Russia's war against Ukraine. We will continue to stay vigilant to global economic risks and stand ready to act jointly where appropriate to support resilience, ensure financial stability and mitigate spillovers.