

# UN Human Rights Council 49: UK statement for the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Cambodia

World news story

The UK delivered this statement welcoming Cambodia's long-standing cooperation with the OHCHR on human rights and progress on economic, social and cultural rights.



Thank you, Mr President.

The United Kingdom would like to thank Professor Muntarbhorn for his update on the human rights situation in Cambodia.

We are concerned that the judiciary is being used to stifle debate, restrict media freedom and encourage self-censorship. The UK advocates that the Royal Government of Cambodia embrace an open dialogue with all Cambodians including civil society, political parties and communities ahead of the local and national elections in 2022 and 2023. And we urge the Government to embrace and encourage an open and inclusive discourse.

The UK welcomes Cambodia's long-standing cooperation with the OHCHR on human rights and progress on economic, social and cultural rights. We see this as a positive indication of their commitment to engage on human rights issues. We remain committed to engaging with Cambodia to support a human rights-based approach to development, including through Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2022.

Special Rapporteur,

What measures do you believe the Government needs to take to ensure that political parties can fully and fairly participate in local and national elections in 2022 and 2023?

Thank you.

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## [Home improvements to better protect Allesley homes from flooding](#)

The home improvements will see flood protection measures, such as new doors and flood-adapted air bricks to minimise flood damage, installed in the Washbrook Lane and Butt Lane areas.

This work is part of the wider Allesley Flood Risk Management Scheme which is enabled by funding secured by the Environment Agency, Coventry City Council and the Regional Flood & Coastal Committee.

Charles Chandler, Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager from the Environment Agency said:

We're pleased to be able to work with local people to install these property flood resilience measures. Such simple home improvements can really work to reduce the risk of homes flooding and allow people to get back to normal after any flood.

Property level flood resilience measures are a core part of the Environment Agency's long term vision for how we will better protect and prepare homes against the risk of flooding, so it's exciting to bring these improvements to the people of Allesley.

Rita and Raymond Taylor are among the residents who have benefited from the measures. The couple have lived in the area for more than 50 years and moved into their bungalow in the area 16 years ago. Their home has flooded twice in

the past 10 years.

Rita, who is celebrating her 80th birthday soon, said:

We've had new doors and air bricks fitted and it's fantastic to have peace of mind in case there is another flood. The first flood we had was quite bad and it was frightening as in a bungalow you don't have anywhere else to go.

The doors look exactly the same as the ones we had before. They are a bit stiffer to close but that's because they provide the closeness that's needed to stop water from getting in. It's great that this has been offered as we couldn't have afforded to do this ourselves.

Cllr Patricia Hetherington, cabinet member for city services at Coventry City Council said:

I'm really pleased that so many residents have taken up the offer of flood protection measures for their homes from the Environment Agency.

These measures will go alongside wider natural flood management work to help reduce the flooding. Together, I hope local people will see and feel a difference during the next weather event, whenever that comes.

The area has been affected on several occasions when the nearby River Sherbourne has flooded. Flooding has occurred in 2007, 2008, 2012 and 2016, with June to September 2007 being one of the wettest June to September periods on record in the Coventry area.

The Environment Agency is also working with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to help reduce the risk of flooding in the area through Natural Flood Management (NFM) techniques. These include building 'leaky barriers', planting trees, gapping up hedges and creating new pools.

This investment forms part of the Government's £5.2 billion investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management in England over the next six years. This long-term commitment will better protect hundreds of thousands of properties, including homes, businesses, schools and hospitals. This record investment will help the nation 'build back better' by making properties more resilient to flooding, and 'build back greener' by working with nature to make us more resilient to climate change.

Members of the public can [sign up for free flood warnings](#) and ensure they [know what to do in case of flooding](#).

You can check your flood risk, sign up for free flood warnings and keep up to

date with the latest situation at [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow [@EnvAgencyMids](https://twitter.com/EnvAgencyMids) on Twitter for the latest flood updates.

If you are experiencing flooding, you should report this to our free 24-hour incident hotline: 0800 80 70 60 to allow us to assess the situation and respond appropriately.

## Notes to editors

- Flood Resilient doors being installed provide a stronger seal than standard doors and are steel reinforced with locking mechanisms along the side as well as across the bottom to give greater compression. An additional hinge located at the bottom of the door also aids compression.
  - The special airbricks being installed have a self-activating gate which will automatically shut off to prevent water entering the property when there is a flood. They are designed to replace standard airbricks and allows air to freely pass through when not in flood conditions whilst an integrated mesh stops insects and debris from entering the property.
  - The Allesley scheme will see 43 homes and business better protected from the risk of flooding and along side property resilience measures, natural flood management measures installed in the catchment which to date include over 50 leaky barriers, 5 retention pools, over 1500m of planted hedgerow and 70 trees with further measures planned later in the year.
  - NFM techniques are measures that work with nature to contribute towards reducing the impact of flooding. Measures reduce surface run-off of rainwater and slow the flow of water once it enters watercourses. NFM is a low carbon alternative to more traditional flood defence measures such as flood walls. NFM can increase carbon capture and storage whilst construction practices look to use locally sourced materials and local contractors to reduce carbon emissions.
  - For every £1 spent improving protection from flooding and coastal erosion, we avoid around £5 of property damages. This long-term commitment will make homes, businesses and infrastructure more resilient to the increasing impacts of climate change.
  - The Capital Programme will also prove central to the Environment Agency reaching its target of becoming a net zero organisation by 2030 – by embracing innovative ways of working that minimise the carbon emissions we produce, and the carbon produced through our supply chain, when we build flood defences.
  - The investment across the country will help enable communities adapt to the future risk of climate crisis.
  - Using partnership funding enables us to secure investment beyond levels affordable to central government alone and enables more local choice, while encouraging innovative, cost-effective options where communities may play a greater role.
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# National diversity accreditation sign up – a first for the UK nuclear sector

The Programme and Project Partners at Sellafield are proud to announce they have signed up to undertake the Investors in Diversity accreditation from the National Centre for Diversity (NCD).

The partnership is the first in the nuclear sector to pursue the diversity award and hopes to set a precedent for many others to follow.

The accreditation is recognised as the national equality standard providing organisations with a bespoke approach to embedding equality, diversity, inclusion and fairness in all that it does.

The programme focuses on the NCD's FREDIE principles – fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement.

The Programme and Project Partners currently have a team of around 1,400 people drawn from the partner organisations and is 3 years into a 20-year contract. The team is set to increase to 1,900 people over the next year.

Programme and Project Partners managing director, Duncan Elliott said:

We're almost 3 years into our partnership and recognise we can do more to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across our team.

The Investors in Diversity accreditation will provide us with a framework to create an environment where all our employees can thrive and one which attracts the talent we need to deliver some of the UK's most challenging infrastructure projects.

We cannot reach our full potential without maximising the talents of all and we're 100% committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across the programme. This is a positive step forward for our partnership, our employees, the talent we will attract and the wider nuclear sector.

The partners first step in working towards the accreditation will be to conduct a workforce wide cultural audit to establish where it is right now in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion, and then, where it wants to be.

Solat Chaudhry, chief executive of the National Centre for Diversity, said:

For us the most critical element of diversity is not where businesses are on your journey, it's where they want to be.

By undertaking the accreditation, the partners are demonstrating

their commitment to improving levels of fairness, respect, equity, diversity, inclusion and engagement.

Working towards the accreditation award is a visible internal and external sign that the partners are committed to achieving sustainable, meaningful positive action. We look forward to working together.

## **More information**

The Programme and Project Partners is a long-term partnership between:

- KBR
- Jacobs
- Morgan Sindall Infrastructure
- Doosan Babcock

Sellafield Ltd is the 5th partner.

The partnership was formed in 2019 to deliver major infrastructure projects at the Sellafield site over the next 20 years.

[National Centre for Diversity](#)

[Diversity accreditation](#)

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## **UN Human Rights Council 49: UK statement for the enhanced interactive dialogue on the Democratic Republic of Congo**

World news story

The UK delivered this statement during the enhanced interactive dialogue on the Democratic Republic of Congo.



# UK Government

The United Kingdom thanks the High Commissioner and the Team of Independent Experts for this update.

We welcome President Tshisekedi's ongoing commitment to strengthening democracy and tackling insecurity; however, we remain deeply concerned by the ongoing human rights situation, and by continued reports of human rights violations and abuses, including acts of sexual and gender-based violence, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and extrajudicial killings. We are especially concerned about the significant risk to civilians posed by the ongoing activities of armed groups in eastern DRC, including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and CODECO, who are threatening the safety and livelihoods of people living in these areas. They must be held accountable.

We strongly encourage DRC to re-double its efforts to improve the human rights situation. There needs to be a clear, time-limited exit strategy from the state of siege, improved coordination with partners to protect civilians, and a commitment to protecting political space while building institutional support and accountability for human rights.

We will continue to support the President's focus on stability, and efforts to build a lasting peace, and call on his government to do so while fully respecting the rights and freedoms of all Congolese people, particularly over the forthcoming electoral period.

High Commissioner,

How can the international community help to ensure the protection of civilians in Ituri and North Kivu, in response to the growing violence and

instability in these regions?

Thank you.

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## [Accessible transport: reference wheelchair report](#)

The government is committed to ensuring disabled passengers have the same access to transport as everyone else, with assistance if physical infrastructure remains a barrier. We want disabled people to be able to travel confidently, easily and without extra cost.

Today (29 March 2022), the government is taking an important step to help fulfil its commitment in the [Inclusive Transport Strategy](#) to review its use of the reference wheelchair standard.

The ISO reference wheelchair standard is the reference point for a range of vehicle and infrastructure designs used across the transport sector and referred to directly and indirectly in accessibility standards for public transport vehicles and infrastructure.

In 2021, the government commissioned an assessment of the prevalence, dimensions, and uses of wheeled mobility-aids in the United Kingdom in relation to the use of the reference wheelchair standard on land-based transport modes.

The findings of this assessment estimate that the [current reference wheelchair standard accommodates 60% of wheelchairs and 54% of wheeled mobility aids](#).

However, this does not necessarily mean that the current standards are inadequate and there will be trade-offs between making transport more inclusive for all passengers by setting more stringent standards that accommodate larger wheelchairs and the practicalities for transport operators to accommodate larger and more diverse mobility aids within conventionally sized public transport vehicles.

However, these findings will be used to help form the broader evidence base to determine the design of future vehicles and transport infrastructure to meet mobility aid users' needs.

In particular, we intend to use these findings to inform the forthcoming review of the [Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000](#), which we expect to conclude by the end of 2023.