

OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

Session 3: UK statement

Mr chair,

The pandemic and countries' responses to the crisis led to border restrictions, lower or stalled manufacturing outputs, spikes in demand for some goods, like personal protective equipment (PPE), and drops in demand for others. This combination of impacts led to significant challenges for the global supply chains, such as delays, diversions, and capacity constraints, all increasing costs.

The UK's starting position when building resilience in critical supply chains is to choose the minimum intervention and take a market-first approach. To strengthen the resilience of the UK's critical global supply chains we trained up to 5,000 more HGV drivers in England and moved 29,000 additional lorry loads of freight to railways.

The transport industry was one of the hardest hit by the pandemic. International aviation passenger traffic was down 60% over 2020, bringing air travel totals back to 2003 levels. Transport facilitation can support economic recovery as this industry gets back on its feet. And states can intervene to mitigate the environmental effect. For example, airline slots that airlines are compelled to honour result in environmentally-damaging and expensive 'ghost' flights continuing to operate with few passengers. The UK government has just extended alleviation from these slot rules and widened the list of situations where airlines can claim justification for not using their slots. This balances the need for continued support for the aviation sector's finances, providing airlines with flexibility, while ensuring slots get used where demand allows.

And from the sky, to the road. We have committed to ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, and ensuring that by 2035 all cars must be fully zero emissions capable. Industry figures show over 650,000 new plug-in cars registered in the UK since 2010, and over 1 in 7 cars sold in 2021 had a plug. And range is increasing as costs are falling: There are 20 electric vehicle models that now come with a range of over 200 miles, and battery prices are little more than a tenth of what they were in 2010.

The UK government is ensuring that our charging infrastructure network is reliable, accessible, and meets the demands of all motorists, with over 25,000 public charging points in the UK, and a particular focus on local on-street residential charging.

The car and van sector is relatively easier to decarbonise, through the combination of a proven low carbon technology and growing consumer demand; and the trend in this industry is positive. But governments still have a key role to play in making sure this heavily polluting sector is free to realise its green potential.

Thank you.

OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum Session 1: UK statement

Thank you Madam Chair,

the UK believes that innovation is a key driver of the economic growth needed to recover from the pandemic. It also improves living standards through the development of new ideas, products and processes, bringing benefits for both citizens and society.

I would like to share a few important elements of our approach, in harnessing the power of innovation as a part of a sustainable economic recovery.

First, the pace of technological change and global competition means that we need to consider how to support the sectors and technologies that will help shape our economies' future. For example, in the UK the digital and creative industry sectors are a critical driver of innovation and growth. We are nurturing a safe, fair and open digital economy and building on our advantages in foundational technologies like AI, quantum computing, and digital twins, so that the sector can flourish.

Second, the British Business Bank – a state-owned economic development bank established by the UK Government – is tackling regional discrepancies in access to finance and is addressing gender and ethnic diversity challenges, including through ensuring diversity in the recipients of its Start Up Loans and its associated mentoring programme.

Third, a regulatory system for an innovative economy needs to accommodate new processes, products and business models, and provide a supportive environment. The UK government is using regulation to unlock cutting-edge technologies such as drones and autonomous vehicles, easing the regulatory compliance red tape burden on business, and hard-wiring competition principles into regulatory decision-making.

And finally, we need to encourage the adoption and diffusion of innovative ideas and technologies across the economy. Even the most innovative economies are characterised by only a minority of firms engaging in innovation at the cutting edge. The full benefits of innovation are realised when new ideas and technologies are adopted and diffused by firms throughout the economy. Studies show that ICT, when adopted with good management practices, achieves a 20% productivity improvement. When adopted with poor practices, just 2%.

COVID-19 has forced businesses to rethink their operations. BeTheBusiness estimate that 3 years' worth of digital transformation took place in 3 months

following March 2020. In the UK we are working with industry to develop a new management programme to upskill 30,000 SMEs and announcing Help to Grow: Digital, a new scheme to help 100,000 SMEs save time and money by offering them vouchers so they can adopt productivity-enhancing software as well as free impartial advice.

These are just some of the measures the UK is taking to use the power of innovation to drive a sustainable economic recovery. I thank you for your attention.

UK Statement at Scientific and Technical Sub-committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS): Space debris.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates

The Delegation of the United Kingdom is pleased to have the opportunity to share with you the progress and developments we have made since the last meeting of this sub-committee.

In September of 2021, the UK published its National Space Strategy, the first time the UK government has brought together civil and defence space policy. The Strategy sets a bold vision for the UK's space future, recognising the changing nature of the global space sector and the increasing strategic importance of space to the UK's national interests. In particular it recognises the underpinning need to deliver a safe, sustainable and secure space environment.

The Strategy notes the growing risk posed by accidental collisions with space debris and sets out the UK's intent to lead the global effort to make space more sustainable. In June this year, the G7 countries issued a statement recognising the growing hazard of space debris and committing to the safe and sustainable use of space to support humanity's ambitions now and in the future. The UK also placed great importance on work of the Inter-Agency Debris Coordination Committee in developing a common understanding of the sustainable use of Earth orbit. We will continue to use the IADC work and their associated guidelines to inform our decision making processes.

Adherence to these guidelines will slow the proliferation of debris generation, but alone will not ensure protection to those satellites currently in orbit. In higher orbits, the current debris population will remain in place for centuries or longer, posing an ongoing risk to the satellites we are so reliant on.

That is why the UK is also delivering missions targeted to address the problem as it currently stands. To mitigate the risk from debris during a satellite's operational mission, we must be able to predict and warn satellite operators of potential collisions in real time through space surveillance and tracking. The UK has been conducting space surveillance since 2008 and was a founding member of the EU's Space Surveillance and Tracking capability in 2015. In recent years we have continued to develop our national capability to better track satellites and debris, and conduct analysis of satellite orbits and conjunction, fragmentation and re-entry events. We regularly share analysis and data with international partners on potential hazards. We continue to invest research and development funding into areas such as artificial intelligence, software development, novel optical sensing and others which are proposed by the UK's vibrant academic and industry sectors. This year, we will roll out this service to commercial satellite operators licensed in the UK. The service will provide them with warnings when their satellites are at risk of collision, as well as the contextual information they need to make a safe decision about whether to manoeuvre. This analysis is conducted by our team of expert civil and military orbital analysts in the UK Space Operations Centre. From our research, we believe that this will support smaller satellite operators in particular, who may not have the resources to conduct this analysis themselves. We are proud that we are able to support our industry and international partners in this way to help achieve our common aim of maintaining an orbital environment that is safe and sustainable for all.

In addition, we need to take steps to not only manage but reduce the problem caused by debris. ESA and NASA studies have estimated that we can stabilise the Low Earth Orbit population by removing 5-10 pieces of debris per year. We are currently studying the feasibility of a UK-led commercial mission to remove multiple pieces of debris from orbit. From its operations centre in the UK, the company Astroscale's ELSA-d mission is trialling new technology to capture and remove debris.

Through the European Space Agency, the UK is an investor in space safety including substantial commitments to active debris removal and in-orbit servicing through the ADRIOS programme. Planned for 2025, Clearspace-1 is the first space mission exclusively dedicated to the removal of an existing object in orbit, and is an important step towards a cleaner space environment.

The UK aims to be at the forefront of modern regulation for novel space activities, while keeping space sustainable, safe, and secure. We will explore advanced in orbit servicing, refuelling and assembly technologies as well as debris removal to ensure the UK is ready to grasp the opportunities of the future space economy. The UK recognises the growing problem of space debris and is committed to playing our part in the global effort to maintain the safe use of the orbits on which we all rely. There is a growing interest in space debris among the UK public, who are becoming more aware of their dependence on satellite data. The interest from the public, and indeed the British Royal Family who have recently heard from me and others on the threat of debris, shows the growing momentum for action in the UK.

We are pleased that London will host the Secure World Foundation's Space Sustainability Summit in June, later this year, and aim to use this event to deepen our efforts to make space sustainable. I hope to see many of you at the event, in person if we can.

Thank you Chair and distinguished delegates.

[UK Statement at Scientific and Technical Sub-committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space \(COPUOS\): Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space](#)

World news story

Delivered by Tony Forsythe, Head of Space Technology at the UK Space Agency, 8 February 2022.



Chair,

The United Kingdom has participated in the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space for a considerable number of years and recognises its usefulness as a forum for exchanging views about the technical aspects of such sources, and for promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Safety Framework. Such exchanges have allowed the Working Group to conclude that the Safety Framework is widely accepted and is valued by member States when developing and applying their national safety systems. No significant implementation challenges have been identified. The UK looks forward to receiving the Working Group's report at this session, giving the conclusions that it has been able to draw from its current work plan and recommending any further work that needs to be done.

The UK delegation is aware of ambitious plans for manned space missions to other solar bodies such as the Moon and Mars which may entail the expanded use of nuclear power sources. We, therefore, consider that the STSC should ask the Working Group to gather relevant information about such potential future uses of NPS in outer space, especially with regard to the use of fission reactors for propulsion or habitation purposes. Based on this information-gathering exercise the Working Group should be asked to make recommendations about the need for additional international guidance on safety standards and how such standards might best be developed, either by further work within the Working Group or by establishing a new expert group as was done when drafting the Safety Framework.

Thank you, chair.

Published 15 February 2022

[British High Commission launches mentoring programme for budding journalists](#)

World news story

The British High Commission on Tuesday announced the launch of the Chevening Mentoring Scheme for budding journalists.



The three-month mentorship programme has been designed to target women and minorities working for media outlets or as freelance journalists across Pakistan. Fellows from the flagship Chevening South Asia Journalism Programme will act as mentors for those picked to join the scheme, and will share their knowledge and experience with young journalists on one-on-one coaching sessions, as well as group discussions.

The British High Commission inaugurated a successful, similar mentorship programme targeted at lawyers and entrepreneurs in 2020. Its second phase was launched last year during which Chevening alumni mentored a group of eight women and two men. The participants benefitted in a wide range of areas, enabling them to become thought leaders and to drive positive change in their chosen field.

2022 marks 75 years of UK-Pakistan relations with a programme of joint activities planned throughout the year.

Fouzia Younis, Head of Communications and Public Diplomacy at the British High Commission Islamabad, said:

To mark 75 years of Pakistan's independence this year, I am pleased to launch a new mentoring programme aimed at backing and bringing up talented women and minority journalists. They will get to learn from some of the best journalists in their profession, and bring their stories to readers in Pakistan, UK and around the world. We are ek saath.

Mentor and PTV journalist Rasheed Safi said:

Despite the challenges, Pakistan has a vibrant and growing media with more women joining the profession now. Addressing these challenges and equipping women journalists with proper training and mentoring will be a solid step towards a more diverse and inclusive media landscape.

BBC correspondent Sahar Baloch will also be a mentor.

Notes to editors

1. The Chevening South Asia Journalism Fellowship (SAJP) is aimed at mid-career journalists from South Asian countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. The fellowship is hosted by the University of Westminster and funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office.
2. The SAJP fellowship offers full programme fees, living expenses for the duration of the fellowship and return economy flight for the UK. To be eligible for a Chevening SAJP Fellowship, applicants must have at least seven years work experience prior to applying and a postgraduate level qualification at the time of application. Applicants should be mid-career journalists working in the political or economic sectors in Pakistan and have good working knowledge of English (which may be assessed by a qualified English language assessor).

3. The British High Commission supports inclusion, education and opportunity for all. Over the years, BHC has made efforts to encourage more women to apply, as a result of which female scholars have risen from just 6% in 2013 to around 60% last year. Anyone who has the ambition, curiosity, a clear vision for the future and the ability to achieve goals should apply for a Chevening Scholarship. Selected scholars will join a community of over 50,000 alumni worldwide.
4. Visit [Chevening website](#) for detailed information on the eligibility criteria, award specifications, and how to apply.

For further information updates

For updates on the British High Commission, please follow our social media channels: * Twitter: [@UKinPakistan](#) [@CTurnerFCDO](#) * [Facebook](#) * [Instagram](#) * [Website](#)

Contact:
British High Commission
Islamabad
Tel: 0300 500 5306

Published 15 February 2022