

# UK General Statement at the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of COPUOS

Chair, Distinguished Delegates

We would first like to take this opportunity to join with others in welcoming the Chair to his new role. We would also like to thank UNOOSA Director, Simonetta Di Pippo, for continuing to take the bilateral relationship between the UK and UNOOSA from strength to strength in recent years and wish Simonetta all the best in her future endeavours.

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 2021 the UK released its National Space Strategy. The National Space Strategy is the first time the UK government has brought together civil and defence space policy and sets a bold vision for the UK's space future. Critically the National Space Strategy highlights the importance that the UK attaches to the United Nations and COPUOS. International collaboration with our partners and allies, delivery agencies, industry and academia remains central to our vision in securing our ambitions and building future global innovation. To this end, 2022 promises to be an exciting year for international space cooperation. Later this year we should see the first observations from the James Webb Space Telescope to which the UK contributed to the MIRI instrument. We will also see the launch of ESA's Rosalind Franklin Rover which has had significant involvement from UK industry and academia.

We are also pleased to see continued multilateral cooperation in 2022 on many of the most pressing issues facing us today in outer space. At this moment there are parallel international conversations happening both here in Vienna, where the UK is proud to play a role in supporting UNOOSA's work on many issues including the Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space, and in Geneva, where the UK is leading efforts in the newly established working group to tackle threatening space behaviours.

Space Sustainability is a key priority for the UK. The UK acknowledges the important work of the Inter-Agency Debris Coordination Committee in developing a common understanding of the sustainable use of Earth orbit and continue to use this work and their associated guidelines to inform our decision-making processes. Pertinent to recent events the UK encourages adherence to the Space Debris Mitigation guidelines which seek to minimise the potential for on-orbit break-ups which includes preventing intentional destructions which will generate long-lived orbital debris.

The UK is playing a leading role in supporting an inclusive approach to capacity building and implementation of the LTS guidelines. In addition to our intention to submit the UK's annual conference room paper on the

voluntary implementation of the LTS guidelines, the UK was pleased to fund UNOOSA to publish the LTS guidelines in all 6 official UN languages and convene international expert events to exchange information on implementation. The UK will provide a further update in its statement on Long-term sustainability later in the week.

The UK is also pleased to have launched our second project with UNOOSA, entitled Strategic Mapping: International efforts using Space for Climate Action. The purpose is to produce a truly comprehensive study on how international organisations are using space technology to address climate resilience, mitigation, adaptation and monitoring. We'd invite all interested international organisations to reach out to UNOOSA, if they wish to contribute to this valuable exercise.

COP26 took place in Glasgow from 31st October to 12th November 2021 and brought together nations to set the future path to addressing climate change. During the event the UK Space Agency signed a new MicroCarb Implementation Arrangement with French Space Agency CNES and announced several key projects at COP26 which we are now in the process of delivering. These announcements included unveiling the new design of the TRUTHS mission and a heat data pilot in partnership with National Centre for Earth Observation and the Ordnance Survey.

Regarding our spaceflight ambitions, July 2021 saw both the UK Space Industry Regulations signed into law in our Parliament, enabling both horizontal and vertical launch from the UK, and the establishment of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as the UK's independent Spaceflight Regulator. We would like to highlight that the CAA will be providing a technical presentation on the morning of Monday 14th February setting out how they regulate UK space activities, particularly in relation to launch from the UK in the coming year.

The UK delegation recognizes the continuing, constructive work of the working group on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and looks forward to receiving its report at this session. We will deliver a full statement on this later in the week. We would again like to offer our thanks to Dr Sam Harbison for his long-serving and excellent leadership of the working group.

The UK also recognises the importance of the topic of Dark and Quiet Skies and look forward to further discussion in the single issue agenda item next week.

Finally, Chair, distinguished delegates, we look forward to a constructive session to further our cooperation and dialogue in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

---

## Accident involving a light aircraft near Steyning, West Sussex – 11 February 2022

News story

The AAIB has sent a team to Steyning, West Sussex.



An accident involving a light aircraft which occurred this afternoon near Steyning, West Sussex has been notified to the AAIB. An investigation has been launched and a team of inspectors and support staff have been deployed to the accident site to begin gathering evidence.

[Read more about how we investigate aircraft accidents](#)

Published 11 February 2022

---

## UK-EU talks on the Northern Ireland Protocol: joint statement, 11 February 2022

News story

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and European Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič spoke about the need for progress on the Northern Ireland Protocol.



Statement by Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič:

The Foreign Secretary and Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič met on 11 February at Carlton Gardens in London. This was their third in-person meeting.

They agreed on the need for progress in their talks in the interest of people in Northern Ireland, to stay in close touch and that officials will continue intensive discussions in the coming days.

Published 11 February 2022

---

## [Lassa fever cases identified in England, following travel to West Africa](#)

### **Latest update**

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) can confirm that the monitoring periods, for contacts of the Lassa fever cases who required active monitoring, have now been completed. No further cases have been identified. We would like to thank our partners in the NHS for their prompt action and all of the contacts for their cooperation.

The Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust has confirmed that the patient has been discharged.

## **Previous updates**

### **Wednesday 16 February 2022**

UKHSA continues to follow up and closely monitor individuals identified as contacts of 3 recently confirmed cases of Lassa fever. No further cases have been identified to date.

NHS Trusts have performed risk assessments on individuals and patients who have worked or stayed in the same ward areas as the Lassa patients. Individuals have been given advice on monitoring and testing. The majority of individuals will complete monitoring by early March.

The risk to the general public remains very low.

### **Friday 11 February 2022**

UKHSA can confirm that the probable case of Lassa fever under investigation is now confirmed, bringing the total number of cases to 3. Sadly, this individual has died.

We are contacting the individuals who have had close contact with the cases prior to confirmation of their infection, to provide appropriate assessment, support and advice. The risk to the general public remains very low.

A Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust spokesperson said:

We confirm the sad death of a patient at our trust, who had confirmed Lassa fever. We send our deepest condolences to their family at this difficult time.

We will continue to support the patient's family and our staff and are working closely with colleagues from UKHSA to undertake a robust contact tracing exercise.

### **Wednesday 9 February 2022**

#### **Two people diagnosed with Lassa fever in England**

A further probable case of Lassa fever is under investigation. The cases are within the same family in the East of England and are linked to recent travel to West Africa.

Lassa fever is an acute viral haemorrhagic illness caused by Lassa virus. People usually become infected with Lassa virus through exposure to food or household items contaminated with urine or faeces of infected rats – present in a number of West African countries where the disease is endemic. The virus can also be spread through infected bodily fluids.

Most people with Lassa fever will make a full recovery, however severe illness can occur in some individuals. One of the cases has recovered, while

the other will receive specialist care at the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust.

The probable case is receiving care at Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The High Consequence Infectious Disease Network is engaged with their ongoing care.

Dr Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Advisor at UKHSA, said:

We can confirm that 2 cases of Lassa fever have been identified in England, and a further probable case is under investigation. The cases are within the same family and are linked to recent travel to West Africa.

Cases of Lassa fever are rare in the UK and it does not spread easily between people. The overall risk to the public is very low. We are contacting the individuals who have had close contact with the cases prior to confirmation of their infection, to provide appropriate assessment, support and advice.

UKHSA and the NHS have well established and robust infection control procedures for dealing with cases of imported infectious disease and these will be reinforced.

Prior to these cases, there have been 8 cases of Lassa fever imported to the UK since 1980. The last 2 cases occurred in 2009. There was no evidence of onward transmission from any of these cases.

Dr Sir Michael Jacobs, consultant in infectious diseases at the Royal Free London, said:

The Royal Free Hospital is a specialist centre for treating patients with viral haemorrhagic fevers, including Lassa fever.

Our secure unit is run by a highly-trained and experienced team of doctors, nurses, therapists and laboratory staff and is designed to ensure our staff can safely treat patients with these kind of infections.

People living in endemic areas of West Africa with high populations of rodents are most at risk of Lassa fever. Imported cases rarely occur elsewhere in the world. Such cases are almost exclusively in people who work in endemic areas in high-risk occupations, such as medical or other aid workers.

---

# PM call with Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman: 11 February 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman.



The Prime Minister spoke to the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, this afternoon.

He reiterated the strength of our bilateral relationship and committed to further boost investment ties, energy cooperation and people-to-people links.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the UK's partnership with the Gulf Cooperation Council and intention to agree a new UK-GCC trade deal.

They welcomed defence and security collaboration between the UK and Saudi Arabia, noting ongoing regional challenges in Iran and Yemen.

The Prime Minister and Crown Prince looked forward to meeting in person at the earliest opportunity.

Published 11 February 2022