

PM call with Prime Minister Mark Rutte: 8 February 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke with the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte.



The Prime Minister spoke to Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte this evening about the concerning situation on Ukraine's border.

Both leaders agreed the need for de-escalation and the Prime Minister said the UK remained seriously concerned at Russia's intent towards Ukraine.

They agreed on the need for Western unity in the face of Russian aggression, and the importance of preparing severe economic sanctions to deter Russia from crossing the border into Ukraine.

The pair also discussed challenges around the Northern Ireland Protocol and Prime Minister reiterated the importance of agreeing a solution that maintains peace and stability and protects the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its dimensions.

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Statement on the CMA's investigation in to the Arm takeover by Nvidia

Government response

A statement on the cancellation of the Competition and Markets Authority's

investigation into the merger of Nvidia and Arm



Nvidia has today announced it will withdraw from its proposed deal with Arm. As a result, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has confirmed it intends to cancel its investigation into the merger.

The Secretary of State for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport issued a public interest intervention notice about the merger under the Enterprise Act in April 2021. The Secretary of State went on to refer the transaction to a Phase 2 investigation by the CMA in November 2021, based on national security and competition grounds.

As a result of Nvidia's withdrawal today, the CMA will no longer submit a report to the DCMS Secretary of State and the investigation will discontinue.

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[UK and Faroes reach agreement on fishing opportunities for 2022](#)

The UK has secured exchanges of opportunities valued at around £5.5 million for the fishing industry through the annual negotiations with the Faroe Islands, providing certainty for the industry on quota for this year.

[The agreement](#) will allow UK and Faroe vessels to fish in an area of each country's waters. This year, the UK fishing industry will benefit from 1,000 tonnes of cod and haddock, worth approximately £2.2 million, and 1,250 tonnes of Atlantic pollock, worth approximately £1.3 million, as well as around £2 million worth of Ling, Blue Ling, Redfish, Flatfish, and other species.

The opportunities delivered today are worth around £2 million more than under the previous EU arrangements.

Together with the UK's fishing deal with Norway, the UK-Faroes arrangements

provide the UK fleet greater flexibility to manage quota and will release pressure on the North Sea.

Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis said:

I am pleased to announce that we have concluded negotiations with the Faroe Islands, securing a fair and balanced agreement on fishing arrangements for 2022.

Negotiating as an independent coastal State, we have secured a better deal that will provide UK fleets with £5.5 million worth of fishing opportunities, including high priority stocks like Cod and Haddock.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Malcolm Offord said:

This is another important step as we continue to grow as an independent coastal state. Scottish whitefish vessels will be big beneficiaries of this deal but it's good news for the fishing sector across Scotland and the UK more widely as we help to deliver a sustainable and profitable future for this vital industry.

Negotiating as an independent coastal State, the UK has secured a fair and balanced deal with inward transfers in the UK's priority fish stocks, whilst removing aspects of previous arrangements that were of little value to the UK fleet. The agreement also includes the potential for an increase in opportunities for the UK fishing industry during 2022, which could see the total value rise to £7.75 million.

In previous years, bilateral negotiations with the Faroe Islands were led by the European Commission on behalf of the UK and other Member States. The inward quota transfers secured today are set to be worth around £2 million more than allocations dealt out to the UK under the Common Fisheries Policy.

Throughout the negotiations, the UK government worked closely with the devolved administrations to ensure a fair balance of benefit across the UK fleet.

The Written Record for these negotiations has been published on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

The outcome of annual fisheries negotiations with the Faroes will be published in the upcoming update to the Secretary of State determination of fishing opportunities for British fishing boats.

Further information:

- The UK agreed catch limits for 2022 for six jointly managed fish stocks in the North Sea with Norway and the European Union on 10 December.
- The £5.5 million value of fishing opportunities for UK fleets is made up

of 1,000 tonnes of cod and haddock worth approximately £2.2 million and 1,250 tonnes of Atlantic pollock worth approximately £1.3 million. A further 225 tonnes of Ling and Blue Ling worth around £400,000; 10 tonnes of Redfish equating approximately £20,000; 75 tonnes of Flatfish worth approximately £350,000 and 500 tonnes of unspecified other fish stocks worth around £1.3 million.

- This is based on historic landing prices.
- This agreement does not impact the UK's bilateral negotiations with the EU. Those negotiations concluded on 21 December 2021 and focussed on the setting of total allowable catches (TACs) for bilateral UK-EU stocks and a range of related technical measures.
- UK vessels wishing to fish in Faroese waters in 2022 and with an allocation to do so will be able to apply for an external waters licence via the [UK Single Issuing Authority \(UKSIA\)](#).

Business Secretary appoints new non-executive directors to board of Financial Reporting Council

The Business Secretary has today (8 February) appointed 4 new directors to the Board of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC).

Angela Cha, Sir Ashley Fox, Clare Thompson and David Willis will serve as non-executive directors, helping to ensure strong standards of governance at the FRC, which promotes transparency and integrity across UK business.

The new appointments will work alongside Sir Jan du Plessis, who has been confirmed as the organisation's new Chairman following a hearing with the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee in January.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

These appointments, drawing together directors with a wide range of experience, put the FRC in a strong position, and I look forward to working with Sir Jan and his team as we bolster the quality of audit and governance across UK plc.

Angela Cha

Angela was a solicitor who qualified in England in 1990. Since 2010, she has held various consultancy and Non-Executive positions. She is currently a non-executive director of the NSPCC and a co-opted member of the Bath Building Society board.

Sir Ashley Fox

Sir Ashley has been Chair of the Independent Monitoring Authority since 2020 and a business consultant since 2019. He was previously a member of the European Parliament for the South West of England and Gibraltar from 2009 to 2019, a councillor for Bristol City from 2002 to 2010 and a solicitor specialising in insurance litigation from 1992 to 2009. He was knighted in 2019.

Clare Thompson

Clare has had an executive career at PwC between 1976 and 2011, which combines client serving roles with internal leadership, and became a partner in 1988. Her non-executive career began in 2012, through a variety of companies including Bupa and M&G Plc. Clare is currently a senior independent director and audit committee chair of significant financial services groups – both global and domestic.

David Willis

David was a solicitor, latterly Managing Partner of Herbert Smith between 2008 and 2012 and then joint-CEO of Herbert Smith Freehills between 2012 and 2014 following a merger. He has held various non-executive roles since retiring, including Chair of the Paradigm Trust (a multi-academy schools' trust); Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee at Queen Mary University of London; Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee of the Solicitors Regulation Authority; and Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee at United Response.

[Countryside Stewardship scheme opens for 2023 agreements](#)

Farmers and land managers are being encouraged to apply for [Countryside Stewardship](#) (CS) agreements to reward them for their efforts to protect and improve their natural environment as the new scheme opens for applications today (8 February).

Countryside Stewardship gives farmers the opportunity to be paid for environmental work alongside sustainable food production, from restoring wildlife habitats and creating woodlands to managing flood risks.

Farmers in Countryside Stewardship will be well placed to enter the new [Local Nature Recovery scheme](#) – one of the three new environmental land management schemes, which will be fully introduced by 2024. Local Nature Recovery scheme will include the best parts of CS, as well as new elements.

Farming Minister Victoria Prentis said:

I see Countryside Stewardship as a bridge to Local Nature Recovery and I urge farmers to get involved. We have increased payment rates by 30%, and made improvements to the scheme.

We want to incentivise farmers to enhance the natural environment alongside sustainable food production – from restoring wildlife habitats and woodland management, to preserving the character of our beautiful countryside.

Since January this year, Defra has increased Countryside Stewardship rates by an average of 30% and, following close work with industry, changes have been made to broaden the scheme and make it easier to apply.

Simplifications have included introducing online applications for the Mid Tier Scheme to make the process simpler, allowing application for CS Capital Grants to be made all year round giving farmers more time to apply, and changes to a number of management options which will help increase environmental benefits.

Rural Payments Agency Chief Executive Paul Caldwell said:

The 2023 Countryside Stewardship scheme is a key mechanism to support farmers and land managers through the transition period. It will leave them well positioned to enter new schemes in the coming years, and will support them in the creation of a more sustainable future for their agricultural land and woodlands.

Farmers and land managers who are new to taking on environmental work or with expired or expiring Environmental Stewardship agreements can apply for:

- Higher Tier: These are five or 10-year agreements to manage complex land in environmentally significant sites, commons or woodlands which require support from Natural England or the Forestry Commission
- Mid Tier: Five-year agreements offering a range of options for continued land management such as the management of species-rich grassland, and for specific environmental works such as installing fencing
- Wildlife Offers: To help farmers and land managers protect wildlife and preserve the natural environment. They include the Arable Offer, the Lowland Grazing Offer, the Mixed Farming Offer and the Upland Offer
- Capital Grants: For specific environmental works on land, covering hedgerows, trees, orchards and to improve air and water quality. Capital items include activities such as fencing installation and tree planting
- Woodland support: To help manage and protect woodland

[Apply for Countryside Stewardship.](#)