

Kyrgyzstan parliamentary elections of 28 November 2021: UK statement

Mr Chair, I would like to thank the delegation of Kyrgyzstan for raising this issue and congratulate the Kyrgyz government on their latest democratic step.

I would also like to thank the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) for another comprehensive account of an elections process that will help States across the OSCE region identify how they can improve their adherence to OSCE commitments.

The [preliminary assessment from ODIHR's monitoring mission](#) that the elections were peaceful and competitive, with a wide range of political options to choose from, is encouraging.

However, I note the concerns that the overall legal framework places limitations on civil and political rights and diminishes separation of powers and independence of the judiciary. ODIHR's report tells us that strict enforcement of some legislation led to candidates campaigning with caution. This caution does the Kyrgyz electorate a disservice, as the plurality that the election demonstrated was not meaningfully translated into an engaged and vibrant political landscape.

On media freedom, ODIHR's report tells us that some media outlets were reticent to cover activities of contestants, instead focusing on the regular activities of the president and authorities. The report also notes the absence of critical and analytical reporting during the official campaign, thereby limiting the voters' ability to make an informed choice. The UK encourages the Government of Kyrgyzstan to continue to support Kyrgyzstan's vibrant free media, including by taking account of this week's statement from the OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media. We welcome the work of the Programme Office in Bishkek on the safety of journalists and protection of media outlets, and the work the Office has also done to support civil society organisations more broadly in Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan remains a positive example in the region for media freedom, civil society and competitive elections. The UK wishes Kyrgyzstan's new and returning MPs success as they deliver for the Kyrgyz people and stands ready to support the government in meeting its OSCE obligations.

Thank you.

Seafood sector set to benefit as UK starts Greenland trade talks

Negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement were formally launched today (27 January) seeking to reduce or remove tariffs on seafood, as well as strengthen other aspects of the relationship between the two countries.

Trade between the two countries was worth £10 million in 2020, with coldwater shrimp – worth an estimated £49 million – additionally shipped from Greenland to the UK.

The deal will provide a platform to deepen cooperation on ensuring regional stability in the Arctic as well as collaboration on UK priorities including science, technology, climate change and development.

Talks were launched at a meeting in Copenhagen between British Embassy Copenhagen's Head of Political, Katherine Dark, and the Prime Minister of Greenland, Múte Bourup Egede.

Secretary of State for International Trade Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

A deal with Greenland will be a boost for our fish and seafood processing sector – a key industry for Yorkshire and Scotland.

Greenland also has a vital geo-strategic location in the Arctic, and as such, I look forward to bringing our two countries closer together.

The trade agreements we have agreed so far with 70 countries will help us level up every part of the UK.

Greenland is a major exporter of seafood to the UK. Cutting tariffs of up to 20% on Greenlandic specialities like prawns and cod fillets would benefit UK supermarkets and catering and hospitality businesses and ultimately consumers, by making room for a reduction in wholesale prices.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) plans to begin negotiations in parallel to gain fishing opportunities in Greenland's waters, which could bring significant benefits to the UK's fishing industry.

International Trade Minister Ranil Jayawardena said:

We want to support the many brilliant British businesses that rely on fish from Greenland – and cut costs for the British people.

Together, we can bring our two nations closer together than ever before.

Head of Political, British Embassy Copenhagen, Katherine Dark said:

This deal underlines our commitment to Greenland and the Arctic region. I was delighted to explore several areas of bilateral cooperation during my first visit to Nuuk and Ilulissat in September and look forward to deepening our partnership with Greenland.

Martyn Boyers, CEO of Grimsby Fish Market, said:

The launch of FTA negotiations with Greenland is positive news for Grimsby as much of their product, particularly frozen prawns and white fish, are brought here for packing by local seafood businesses.

An agreement would take away any uncertainty of the continuity of supply, benefiting the local processors who repack product from Greenland. The knock-on effect substantiates continued local jobs and employment as well as benefiting local hauliers who provide onward distribution into caterers, restaurants and food service.

Background:

In 2020, total UK trade with Greenland amounted to £10 million, and DIT estimates that a further £49 million of coldwater shrimp coming into the UK predominantly originated from Greenland that same year.

[North East charities benefit as stinky landfill operator pays £75,000 to make amends for Ryton blight](#)

Suez UK Environment Limited, which failed to meet its environmental obligations and breached the conditions of its environmental permit, submitted an Enforcement Undertaking to the Environment Agency, which has now been accepted.

An Enforcement Undertaking is a voluntary offer made by companies and individuals to make amends for their offending.

The Environment Agency was made aware of nuisance odours at the landfill site in 2015 following thousands of complaints to its national incident hotline from communities in Ryton, Stargate, Stella and Crookhill.

Subsequent investigations found that the cause of the odours was due to excessive landfill gas emissions, produced by rotting waste. Enforcement action was taken by the Environment Agency, requiring Suez UK Environment Ltd to take immediate action to improve its method of capturing landfill gas and work towards a full site closure in 2017.

Area Environment Manager, Andrew Turner, said:

“Nuisance odours from the site persisted for a period of months and led to a great deal of distress for those affected. When companies fail to meet their environmental obligations, it’s a serious matter and we will take appropriate action, which may include civil sanctions.

“Enforcement Undertakings can offer a better resolution than prosecutions, which allow the offender to put things right and help to improve our environment. These payments of £75,000 will do just that by supporting eight different projects across the North East, with benefits that include supporting wildlife and conservational projects, schemes to reduce ‘fly-tipping’ and helping local environment and community organisations.”

The offer from Suez UK Environment Limited detailed the closure of the landfill in 2017 and its subsequent engineering works to complete a landfill gas extraction system and ‘cap’ the site with an impermeable membrane material. These works will help to reduce the risk of further odour nuisance from the site.

UK supports international efforts to protect over 500,000 km of ocean with £2M investment

Today (27 January), Lord Goldsmith announced that the UK will help to protect some of the world’s most important and biodiverse marine environments in the Eastern Pacific, including key migratory routes for sea turtles, whales, sharks, and rays.

At COP26 in Glasgow, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama made headlines with their announcement that the four countries are now working together to expand and connect marine protection covering over 500,000 km² of ocean.

The Eastern Tropical Marine Corridor stretches from the rich breeding and feeding grounds around Malpelo Island, the Cocos Ridge, and the Cordillera de Coiba seamounts, to the Galapagos Islands that inspired Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution.

The UK will invest an initial £2m of UK Aid through the World Bank’s PROBLUE

fund, and deploy marine experts to provide technical assistance through our Ocean Country Partnership Programme.

This initiative is supported by the UK's newly established [Blue Planet Fund](#), that will help us do even more to develop sustainable marine economies around the world, protect species found nowhere else on earth, and help coastal communities counter a range of threats – including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and plastic pollution.

The UK has a wealth of experience to share – from restoring fragile habitats like corals and key carbon-rich ecosystems like mangroves, to deploying the satellite, drone, and acoustic monitoring technologies that can bolster marine protection and support nature's amazing ability to recover.

During his visits to Ecuador and Costa Rica this week, Lord Goldsmith had the opportunity to see some of the work that is already under way in the Eastern Pacific.

In Ecuador, he joined a Galapagos community beach clean and helped launch a refilling station that will help islanders and tourists alike drink more water, for free – and reuse the plastic bottles that are so often used once, before ending up in our rivers and ocean. And in Costa Rica, he saw how coastal communities are using sustainable tourism to support conservation at scale.

Speaking at a meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean in Costa Rica today, he said:

I commend and thank Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama for their leadership. This is exactly the sort of ambition and cooperation we need now.

I am delighted that the UK will be supporting this inspiring initiative through our newly established Blue Planet Fund, drawing on decades of experience protecting an area of ocean larger than India around the UK Overseas Territories.

The Eastern Tropical Marine Corridor is set to become the largest transboundary marine protected area in the world, taking us closer to protecting at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030 – a UK-led campaign backed by over 100 countries.

Lord Goldsmith urged leaders from across government, sectors, and society to work together to accelerate the critical transition towards a decarbonised, net-zero, nature-positive global economy – and make sure that everyone benefits from turning things around.

Home Office seeks new Security Industry Authority members

News story

Do you want to be part of an authority that helps to protect the public?



Security Industry Authority

Do you want to contribute to an authority which is ensuring that private security operatives are properly trained and qualified to perform their essential duties?

If so, you can do this by becoming a Non-Executive Director of the Security Industry Authority (SIA), the regulator of the UK's private security industry.

As a member of the authority you will:

- work with the Chair and other authority members in setting the SIA's strategic direction
- chair and participate in authority sub-committees
- oversee the work of the SIA's Chief Executive in managing the authority and its delivery programme
- represent the SIA in communications with key stakeholders

Details of the appointment are:

- a term of 2 to 4 years
- £9,160 per annum, based on an expected time commitment of 32 days attendance
- working remotely during the Covid pandemic, but in more normal times authority members are required to attend meetings in London and other parts of the UK
- successful candidates will be required to have, or be willing to obtain, security clearance to Security Clearance (SC) level

You must have:

- a successful track record of achievement at Board level or equivalent

- a thorough understanding of issues arising from delivering services and business improvements within a high profile and sensitive environment
- a good understanding of the wider issues relating to the regulation of the private security industry or a sector with similar characteristics to the private security industry

[Read the full details and apply.](#)

The closing date for applications is 11pm on Monday 21 February 2022.

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