

Report by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly: UK response, October 2022

Madam President, thank you for your address and welcome back to the Permanent Council.

It was a great honour for the United Kingdom to host the [OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Annual Session](#) this year. I was proud to join Professor Ibrahim and Dr Elliott on the panel for preventing and prosecuting war crimes, and speak to the UK's support for the [Murad Code](#). I look forward to continued engagement on this important initiative, which will help to ensure justice for survivors of sexual violence.

I also congratulate you and OSCE parliamentarians on the successful adoption of the [Birmingham Declaration](#), which was approved with overwhelming support. We strongly endorse the Declaration's core tenet – that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, facilitated by the Belarusian regime, constitutes a gross violation of the fundamentals of international law, as well as a severe breach of the OSCE's commitments and principles. It jeopardizes the security architecture of Europe and the whole OSCE region.

In response to my Russian colleague's tired accusations on access in July, may I remind them that it is Russia's actions alone that led to their exclusion.

Unfortunately, since the Annual Session we have seen the Kremlin's war rage on. In the last few weeks alone we have witnessed Russian military attacks on both civilians and critical infrastructure in Kyiv and across Ukraine, with the intention of cutting off Ukrainian people from energy, heating, and water. Sham referenda have been cynically deployed to facilitate attempted illegal land grabs. And the Russian military's bombing of Ukraine's agricultural and transport infrastructure continues to exacerbate global food insecurity.

Not content with attacking another State, the Russian Government continues to inflict misery upon its own population. As the latest Moscow Mechanism report found, the Russian government continues to wage a systematic and repressive war against the freedoms of its own people. This has included cracking down on independent media and restricting civil society activities, all of which also serve to quell any internal dissent against its external aggression.

So what role should the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly play in all of this?

As you said, Madam President, during an interesting side event at the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference, the role of Civil Society Organisations is key in all OSCE participating States. You noted the importance of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly working with civil society organisations and that OSCE

Parliamentarians should use their privileged positions wisely, to reach out to others and to influence beyond their own Parliaments.

We agree that parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in harnessing their considerable political leverage to ensure sustained support for Ukraine. This includes pursuing accountability for war crimes and pushing for humanitarian, economic and military assistance to Ukraine. It also includes forcefully defending OSCE principles in all available fora, and supporting diplomatic efforts to secure a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, with full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. I would also like to thank the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and its members for their ongoing efforts in this regard.

Beyond the war, parliamentarians play a key role in continuing to support participating States to implement their OSCE principles and commitments. This includes defending human rights and democratic institutions, sharing knowledge and expertise on security challenges and military transparency, and performing the necessary checks and balances to hold our executives to account. I welcome the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's vital work in these areas.

In conclusion – and ahead of your Autumn Meeting in Warsaw next month – the UK offers its full support to you and the Parliamentary Assembly and we look forward to continued co-operation and collaboration in 2023 and beyond.

MDP supports Operation London Bridge

The Queen's funeral was the biggest policing operation the UK had ever seen. Thousands of police officers, including over 150 officers from the Ministry of Defence Police, were deployed in response to the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

For 10 days, the nation and the world mourned the Queen's passing which culminated in a state funeral on Monday 19 September. This was the first royal state funeral since the Queen's Father, King George VI in 1952, with the only other state funeral being held for Winston Churchill in 1965.

The MDP were amongst the reinforcements brought in from forces across the UK to ensure the state funeral was a safe and secure event. This included an increased number of MDP officers being deployed across London, particularly at MOD Main Building as well as to a number of strategic locations assisting Thames Valley Police and the Metropolitan Police Service.

Keeping London Safe

Defence HQ became a forward base for soldiers deployed to Whitehall during

the Queen's funeral and national mourning period. There was also an increase in visitors to the Whitehall area with some of the busiest days ever seen at Horse Guards Parade, as members of the public came to pay their respects to Her Majesty The Queen.

The team at Whitehall were led by Senior Police Officer, Chief Inspector Jimmy Carr who described MDP's role as "an extraordinary contribution which passed with great success."

Chief Inspector Carr said:

I am immensely proud of the MDP, who have shown outstanding professionalism and teamwork. It was an honour for every officer involved to serve their final duty to Her Majesty the Queen.

Chief Inspector Jimmy Carr (right) talking to officers from the Metropolitan Police Service

Plans that had been twenty years in the making were put into action. Inspector Jim McCulloch from Whitehall had an instrumental role in the planning phases which directed our response during Operation London Bridge. Working closely with Defence and policing partners the security operation at Defence HQ was stood up following the death of the Queen and did not conclude until after the state funeral.

These plans ensured the smooth running of daily functions at Main Building as well as providing protective security of Defence people and assets involved in the funeral proceedings. We continued to keep Defence safe whilst ensuring the public could safely pay their respects. Chief Inspector Jimmy Carr described Inspector McCulloch's role in planning the MDP's response as 'exceptional'.

Officers from across the Force including the Special Escort Group, Central Support Group and Operational Support Unit were deployed to support the operation at Main Building. This included supporting vehicle checks and facilitating the movement of Defence personnel in and around Main Building as well as providing assistance to our armed officers on duty at Tilt Yard. Chief Inspector Carr commented that on many occasions officers were stopped by members of the public and thanked for keeping them safe. A comment reflected across London throughout the policing operation.

The team from Whitehall also provided increased support to Defence during early morning rehearsals which took place throughout the mourning period leading up to and including the day of the funeral. The day of the funeral saw a significant deployment of MDP officers providing protective security for ceremonial troops who required access to Main Building and were getting ready to march in the funeral procession from Horse Guards Avenue.

Ceremonial troops at Horse Guards Avenue

A surge of officers, including officers from RAF Menwith Hill, were also deployed to Regent's Park Barracks which became an operating base for the Kings Troop during Operation London Bridge. The King's Troop had a pivotal role in the movement of the Queens Coffin to the Palace of Westminster and the gun salute in Hyde Park on the day of the funeral. The MDP provided protection to the King's Troop during their time at Regent's Park Barracks including when performing their ceremonial duties.

Providing Aid to Windsor

Our colleagues from Thames Valley Police (TVP) requested additional Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs) to support the operation at Windsor, this included during funeral rehearsals and the day of the funeral.

MDP supplied over 40 AFOs from across the Force to support the operation at Windsor and their role was to provide armed protection to the military units participating in the funeral, the public, and Funeral Cortege.

This included officers from the MDP Marine Unit at Portsmouth who were initially deployed at the beginning of the operation to support the Met Police by providing waterborne support on the Thames as part of the state funeral arrangements. The officers were stood down and redeployed to assist with the armed support at Windsor.

On the day of the funeral MDP AFOs worked at Windsor alongside armed officers from TVP, as well as the Civil Nuclear Constabulary who provided mutual aid during Operation London Bridge.

Inspector David Hutchins, Bronze Commander for the MDP operation at Windsor, said:

Since 2020 I have been involved in planning the MDP response to Operation London Bridge and engaging with our policing partners about the unique capabilities of the MDP.

Our support to the operation was implemented with military precision, from the pre-arranged mutual aid arrangements, to last minute changes such as the removal of waterborne support on the Thames, to providing additional armed officers to Thames Valley Police in Windsor.

This for me was a 'once in a lifetime' experience and deploying as the Bronze Commander for the MDP at Windsor, I was proud of the professionalism and contribution of our officers especially over long exhausting hours to help deliver a safe and successful event.

MDP officers deployed to Windsor

Dog Support and Project Servator

The MDP Dog Unit were amongst the resources deployed to provide mutual aid during Operation London Bridge. This included six Explosive Search Dog teams who assisted at Windsor and Stansted Airport during the operation.

In addition to our Dog Unit providing support at Windsor, our Project Servator officers were also deployed as part of an existing mutual aid arrangement to support Thames Valley Police at the Windsor Guard Change.

An additional team, led by Inspector Andrew Whitlam, were deployed to specifically support Operation London Bridge during the mourning period, and a surge of Project Servator officers provided mutual aid at Windsor on the day of the funeral.

Project Servator officers are specially trained to spot the tell-tale signs that someone may be planning or preparing to commit a crime. As well as providing a reassuring presence, the aim of Project Servator is to disrupt criminal activity. During Operation London Bridge, a number of arrests resulted directly from the MDP Project Servator team being deployed to assist the operation.

Inspector Whitlam said:

I am hugely proud of the contribution made by MDP Project Servator in Windsor and recognition as experts in this specialist area of policing by our Home Office colleagues was justly deserved.

Inspector Andrew Whitlam standing with Chief Constable Lucy D'Orsi (left) from the British Transport Police, PC Mark Hornsey (centre) from the MDP and Thames Valley Police Chief Constable, John Campbell (right)

Behind the scenes

Not all those involved in Operation London Bridge were on the front line. Many MDP officers supported the operation in roles behind the scenes as well as those who backfilled core roles to ensure daily tasking continued to be met.

The MDP Gold Cell, led by Chief Inspector Iain Williams, was stood up at the beginning of the operation to facilitate requests for mutual aid from the National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC), and our partner forces including Essex Police. PS James Pollard, from MDP HQ was requested by the National Mobilisation Co-ordinator to assist the NPoCC Planners in London. PS Pollard has recently returned from a secondment at NPoCC and had a detailed understanding of the Bridges Operation. His primary role was to ensure the mobilisation of all Mutual Aid requests from TVP and MPS were fulfilled in order to support the Operation.

Jason Gwillim, Ministry of Defence Police Assistant Chief Constable said:

Operation London Bridge was a huge success for policing. The scale of the police operation was unprecedented and unlike any other event in the history of policing in the UK. The MDP were immensely proud to be amongst the forces who gave mutual aid and contributed to Operation London Bridge. This required many of our officers to work away from home and work extended hours alongside policing and Defence colleagues. Our involvement required significant planning and expertise, and throughout the policing operation our officers have shown outstanding professionalism and commitment.

Our contribution has been recognised by our policing partners, with messages of thanks received from a number of our Home Office colleagues. I am very grateful to everyone in the MDP who was involved in Operation London Bridge and worked so hard following the passing of Her Late Majesty The Queen. This did not just include the officers deployed to support Operation London Bridge but everyone who continued to provide business as usual duties, protecting and serving Defence. This will be an occasion we will remember for many years to come.

Cryptocurrency trading firm shut down after scamming investors

PGI Global UK Ltd has been wound up by the High Court and the Official Receiver has been appointed liquidator of the company.

The company's principal business activity was the provision of crypto trading packages, blockchain education and health products.

Despite conflicting accounts of the company's trading activity provided by two former directors, it appears that the main business activity conducted by PGI was the sale and purchase of cryptocurrency.

Investors were promised returns of up to 200%. But when these did not materialise, investors were unable to withdraw the funds they had invested.

Three bank accounts were identified as operated by PGI and were used to receive approximately £612,425 from its would-be investors between July 2020 and February 2021.

Payments from the accounts included at least £195,000 paid to personal accounts, and a £10,000 payment to a luxury department store.

PGI is stated to be part of the Praetorian Group International Trading Inc. whose website has been seized by the US Department of Justice and US Department of the Treasury following a seizure warrant issued by the US District Court of the Eastern District of Virginia.

The company's sole appointed director is Ramil Ventura Palafox who lives in USA. He did not cooperate with the Insolvency Service investigation.

The High Court agreed that closing down the company was in the public interest, given the lack of cooperation, failure to maintain, preserve and/or deliver up adequate accounting records, trading with a lack of commercial probity, and failure to comply with statutory obligations and lacking transparency.

Mark George, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

Individuals and businesses that operate under the protections afforded by limited liability are, as a consequence, required to comply with the requirements of the Companies Act.

This case highlights that where we have reasonable concerns about the trading practices of a company the court will take a dim view of any failure to co-operate with a statutory enquiry and will wind up the company in the public interest.

Notes to editors

PGI Global UK Ltd was incorporated on 17 February 2020.

Company registration number: 12466131

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 16th Floor, 1 Westfield Avenue, Stratford, London, E20 1HZ. Telephone: 0300 678 0015 Email: piu.or@insolvency.gov.uk.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). [Further information about live company investigations is available.](#)

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is available.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Michael Tomlinson reappointed as Solicitor General

News story

The Prime Minister has reappointed Michael Tomlinson as Solicitor General for England and Wales.



The Prime Minister has reappointed Michael Tomlinson MP as Solicitor General for England and Wales.

The Solicitor General supports the Attorney in her role as the Government's chief legal adviser. Alongside the Attorney General, the Solicitor General oversees the work of the Law Officers' Departments: the Crown Prosecution Service, the Serious Fraud Office, the Government Legal Department and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate.

The Solicitor General also carries out a number of functions in the public interest—such as considering whether to refer unduly lenient sentences to the Court of Appeal—and taking action when there has been a contempt of court. These functions are carried out independently of the Solicitor's role as a Government Minister.

Commenting on his reappointment, Michael said:

I am honoured to have been reappointed as Solicitor General for England and Wales.

One of my first priorities is to continue the Government's work in rebuilding confidence in our criminal justice system—particularly for victims.

I look forward to working with the Attorney General, Government

lawyers and the Civil Service to play my part in making the law and politics work together at the heart of the UK constitution.

Michael Tomlinson was appointed Solicitor General on 7 September 2022. He was reappointed as Solicitor General on 27 October 2022.

He was previously a Vice Chamberlain of HM Household (Government Whip) between 8 July 2022 and 7 September 2022, and Government Whip (Lord Commissioner of HM Treasury) between 14 February 2020 and 8 July 2022.

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[Non-judicial member appointment to the Sentencing Council](#)

News story

The Lord Chancellor has approved the appointment of Beverley Thompson-Brown OBE as a non-judicial member of the Sentencing Council.



The Lord Chancellor has approved the appointment of Beverley Thompson-Brown OBE, as a non-judicial member of the Sentencing Council, for a second term of 3 years from 15 June 2022.

The Sentencing Council for England and Wales was established by the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 to promote greater transparency and consistency in sentencing, whilst maintaining the independence of the judiciary. The Sentencing Council's responsibilities include; developing sentencing guidelines and monitoring their use; assessing the impact of guidelines on sentencing practice; and promoting the understanding of and increasing public confidence in sentencing and the criminal justice system.

Appointments to the Sentencing Council are regulated by the Commissioner for

Public Appointments and recruitment processes comply with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Beverley Thompson-Brown

Beverley Thompson-Brown has spent over 30 years working in the criminal justice sector initially as a probation officer in London. She was Director for Race, Prisons and Resettlement Services at NACRO for 10 years and is currently an Independent consultant having recently worked on a Lammy-related project for HMPPS. She works across the UK, Australia, USA & Canada on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategies. Prior to this, she was a Senior Civil Servant at HMPS and was awarded an OBE for services to Race Equality in 2000. Furthermore, she has been the Chief Executive of Northampton Probation Service.

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