

Foreign Secretary meets the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs for talks in Madrid

News story

The Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, and Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, José Manuel Albares, met yesterday (15 December) in Madrid.



The Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, and Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, José Manuel Albares, met yesterday in Madrid. This was the Foreign Secretary's first bilateral European visit in her first 100 days in office.

The Ministers agreed to work closely across the international agenda including on combating malign actors, tackling illegal migration and the upcoming NATO summit in Madrid in 2022. They agreed to work on new energy and tech collaborations.

Both underlined the strength of our economic and commercial relations, and the importance of contacts between our societies and citizens – a truly special aspect of our bilateral relationship.

The Foreign Ministers welcomed the constructive nature of negotiations between the EU and the UK in respect of Gibraltar and reaffirmed their shared commitment to the Political Framework of 2020, and agreed that it is in everyone's interest to aim to conclude these talks in Q1 2022. The UK maintained its position on the sovereignty of Gibraltar.

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Public dialogue on location data ethics published

- Independent dialogue is one of the first on location data
- 85 members of the public gave their thoughts about location data use across four workshops
- Findings outlined will inform government guidance on location data ethics to be published next year

[The Geospatial Commission today publishes the findings of an independent public dialogue on location data ethics](#). The project was launched in March and co-funded by the Geospatial Commission and UK Research and Innovation's Sciencewise programme.

The dialogue is one of the UK's first on location data and was delivered by public engagement specialists Traverse and researchers from the Ada Lovelace Institute. Today's report provides evidence on public perceptions about location data use, offering valuable insights into what citizens believe are the key benefits and concerns.

The report will be launched at a [virtual event today](#) at 3pm hosted by The Alan Turing Institute, the national institute for data science and artificial intelligence. Cosmina Dorobantu, Deputy Programme Director for Public Policy at The Alan Turing Institute, will deliver the keynote speech at the event which will also feature a presentation by Traverse and Ada Lovelace, and a panel discussion with leading data experts.

Minister of State for the Cabinet Office, Lord True CBE said:

The evolution of the UK's geospatial ecosystem presents great opportunities to realise significant economic, social and environmental value. The public dialogue report underlines that as we seek to capitalise on these benefits we will always aim to do so in a way that carries the confidence of the public and addresses any concerns.

Independent Commissioner of the Geospatial Commission and Interim Chair of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, Edwina Dunn OBE said:

This independent report on public attitudes about location data is one of the first of its kind and I look forward to exploring how it can help inform the Geospatial Commission's work on location data ethics. The findings will also play an important role in supporting the government's vital work to enable the trustworthy use of data and AI.

Tom Saunders, Head of Public Engagement, UKRI, said:

This timely independent dialogue will help inform the government's geospatial strategy, allowing the UK to unlock the power of location data for economic, social and environmental benefit while balancing individuals' concern over important ethical and privacy considerations. UKRI's Sciencewise programme helps policy-makers understand what the public really thinks, and ensures that experts, government and the public can design a better future together that works for everyone.

Location data powers our everyday lives, telling us about travel disruption, tracking deliveries, and helping us find the place we need to be. The widespread use of new technologies means that data about our lives, including location data, is available in increasing frequency, detail and accuracy, driving innovation and better services. So that we can continue to benefit from widespread use of location data, it is important that data is used in a way that mitigates concerns and retains public confidence.

This public dialogue opened a conversation with 85 members of the public from all four nations to gather evidence on public perceptions about location data use. The dialogue was supported by an independent and expert Oversight Group, which provided expert support and quality assurance from a diversity of perspectives.

The findings outlined in this report will influence the guidance on location data ethics that the Geospatial Commission intends to publish next year and help deliver the [UK Geospatial Strategy](#).

Members of the Oversight Group

- John Pullinger (Chair) and previously the UK's National Statistician
- Andy Gregory, Home Office
- Ben Lyons, Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation
- Charles Kennelly, Esri
- Chris Wroe, Telefónica UK
- David Leslie, The Alan Turing Institute
- Ellis Parry, Information Commissioner's Office (Later Matthew Rice)
- Jagdev Singh Virdee, Independent Consultant
- Jeni Tennison, Open Data Institute (Later Lisa Allen)
- Josh Berle, Mastercard
- Marcus Grazette, Privitar
- Mick Ridley, Global
- Phil Earl, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
- Philipa Sharma, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- Professor Shannon Vallor, Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI), University of Edinburgh
- Professor Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye, Imperial College London
- Renate Samson, Which?
- Simon Whitworth, UK Statistics Authority

- Sue Bateman, Government Digital Service
- Toby Wicks, UNICEF

Editor's note:

The Geospatial Commission is an expert committee that sets the UK's geospatial strategy and promotes the best use of geospatial data. Providing guidance on how to unlock value from sensitive location data while mitigating security, ethical and privacy risks is a key commitment of the UK Geospatial Strategy.

For further information, please contact us at geospatialcommission@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

[Continued efforts to support and promote peace, stability and security in Central Africa](#)

Thank you Mr President.

I want to begin by expressing our heartfelt thanks to SRSF Fall for his insightful briefing today and more significantly, for his continued efforts to support and promote peace, stability and security in Central Africa.

Mr President, your modesty will not appreciate this but I want to join him in his tribute to you in your own leadership, in your work on this Council and on these issues in this region.

In terms of the work of the office itself, we welcome in particular the collaboration between UNOCA and the recently established ECCAS Commission. I know that has been incredibly constructive for you SRSF Fall in the recent period. We are also very encouraged by the links between your office, UNOWAS and other major UN offices in the region.

As you have set out today SRSF Fall, Central Africa continues to face serious political, economic, humanitarian and security challenges.

It remains important that the countries of the region work together, and with the support of the UN, to strengthen regional peace and security, protect civilians in conflict, and promote human rights and resilient economic recovery.

In this regard, I commend UNOCA's ongoing work on conflict prevention and particularly, your mediation efforts across Central Africa. Your work to highlight and support inclusive and meaningful dialogue in countries

preparing for elections is particularly welcome, SRSB.

We welcome and encourage even greater coordination between UNOCA and UN country teams in the sub-region. I know that you are doing this and you are working to convene them but we think a particular focus on delivery of agreed plans and strategies could be incredibly helpful.

Mr President, turning to individual countries in the region, as the SRSB has just done, the United Kingdom would like to reiterate its support to Chad as it undergoes its transition to a civilian and constitutional rule.

The UK welcomes the positive steps towards this transition, including the appointment of a largely civilian cabinet and ongoing talks with armed opposition groups.

We encourage the government of Chad to continue to lead an inclusive process to facilitate a peaceful and successful political transition.

Mr President, the United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the ongoing crisis and continued human rights violations in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon.

The impacts on civilians there continue to be profound.

The conflict in this region has driven around 650,000 people from their homes and forced almost 70,000 people to seek refuge in neighbouring Nigeria.

The continued closure of two thirds of schools, now for a fifth year, means 700,000 children are not receiving an education and we know what that means in terms of a driver of conflict.

The UK has allocated a further US\$6m of humanitarian aid to Cameroon this year.

This funding will provide vital assistance, including food, medical supplies and sanitation provisions. What Cameroon desperately needs is the dialogue the SRSB has just spoken about and we hope you will do all you can to encourage that dialogue as we will.

Mr President, the United Kingdom also strongly condemns the terrorist attacks on civilians in Cameroon's Far North, and across the wider Lake Chad Basin area.

We welcome the efforts of the Multi-National Joint Task Force to tackle Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa in the region. We have also just heard how complex that situation is and we need to continue to focus on that.

The UK Government continues to support regional stabilisation efforts through our support to the regional stabilisation facility, working with international partners and regional governments.

Turning to Burundi, we welcome the efforts by the Government to re-engage with the international community and demonstrate a greater commitment to

human rights.

To this end we continue to urge the Government of Burundi to engage with the UN human rights monitoring mechanisms, including the new Special Rapporteur for human rights, and to ensure that the needs and rights of refugees, other displaced people and host communities are recognised.

Mr President, the UK remains concerned about the ongoing violence in the Central African Republic, which continues to take a distressing toll on the civilian population, compounding an already acute humanitarian situation.

We commend President Touadera for his call for a unilateral ceasefire, and continue to underline the importance of an inclusive peace-building process.

We regret to hear further reports that the Russian private military company Wagner continues to commit human rights abuses in the Central African Republic.

The Wagner Group drive conflict and capitalise on instability for their own interests.

They do not offer long-term security answers in the Central African Republic or elsewhere in Africa, and undermine the work of international peacekeepers.

Mr President, if I may conclude by thanking SRSF Fall. We recognise the huge challenges across the region. We are grateful to you for your energetic and personal commitment to help guide the efforts of peace and stability in the region. We are fortunate to have you Sir.

Joint statement on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Last week we marked the 73rd anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As we celebrate and enjoy our inalienable rights, it is important we recognise those who are denied them by their government.

The people of the DPRK are systematically denied their fundamental freedoms by one of the most repressive and totalitarian regimes in the world.

In the DPRK, the regime continues to hold more than 100,000 people in political prison camps, where they suffer abuses including torture, forced labor, summary executions, starvation, and sexual and gender-based violence. The rest of the population is ruled by fear and denied basic rights of free expression.

These abuses have been exacerbated by the regime's implementation of measures purportedly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The regime has implemented shoot-to-kill orders for anyone attempting to flee the country and has prevented humanitarian aid from getting to those who desperately need it.

The DPRK's repression even extends beyond its borders. The regime has been implicated in international abductions and forced disappearances of Japanese citizens and other nationals, who are kept against their will in the DPRK. We urge the DPRK to resolve all issues related to these abductees, in particular their immediate return.

The DPRK's human rights violations and abuses have been well documented. The UN Commission of Inquiry found that the DPRK commits crimes against humanity directed by the highest levels of the state.

The modern world has no place for such brutality. And it is time for the Council to address it. While we are glad the Security Council discussed this important topic today, we believe it is worthy of a briefing in an open session.

The regime's egregious human rights violations, much like its unlawful WMD and ballistic missile programs, are destabilizing to international peace and security, and must be prioritized within the Council.

Estonia, France, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States urge all Security Council members to support an open briefing next year where we can discuss this dire human rights situation and its implications for peace and security, and focus on the actions the Security Council should take to help the countless individuals impacted by the regime.

And we hope that tomorrow, when the General Assembly, adopts its annual resolution on human rights situation in the DPRK, that UN membership will once again come together and universally condemn the DPRK's violations.

Before I conclude, I want to say a few words just on my sole behalf.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to speak with Joy, a survivor from the DPRK.

Joy wasn't allowed to attend school. She grew up desperately poor, and without, in her words, any dreams. To avoid being married off as teenager by her stepmother, Joy escaped the DPRK, only to be sold into sexual slavery in China because she was not recognized as a refugee. She then escaped – again – to Seoul, but had to leave her only child behind.

Her harrowing story brought tears to my eyes. I am so moved by her strength, her courage, her perseverance.

She reminded me that we need to recognize the human toll of the DPRK's totalitarian regime. Because while it is hard to imagine, Joy considers herself one of the lucky ones.

Thank you.

Training course for Veterinary Dispensary Managers

News story

Details of a VMD Veterinary Dispensary Manager course in May 2022



Following on from the success of the VMD's [Introduction to Veterinary Wholesale Qualified Person](#) training day the VMD is continuing to expand its training portfolio to help support its stakeholders.

The VMD is planning to run a Veterinary Dispensary Manager training course in May 2022. The course will provide an overview of running the practice dispensary effectively, working within the confines of the legislative requirements for retail supply of veterinary medicines.

The training will be provided in a blended learning format of talks and workshops to give working examples and real-life applications of the learning received.

It will cover topics such as:

- Effective management of the veterinary dispensary
- Sourcing veterinary medicines
- Correct storage & labelling
- Prescribing, supplying & dispensing
- Safe handling of veterinary medicines
- How to store & record Controlled Drugs
- Monitoring the use of veterinary medicines
- How to reduce dispensing errors
- Identifying common insufficiencies within dispensary inspections
- Veterinary Medicine Regulation Sector updates

A VMD certificate of attendance will be provided on completion of the course.

The cost of the training is £395. For more information and to purchase a place on the course, please visit the [Eventbrite booking page](#).

The VMD's Training Team are planning a series of training courses; if you are interested in attending a future event, or have any questions, please email training@vmd.gov.uk.

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