

Foreign Secretary to work with Southeast Asia to boost economic and tech ties: 12 December 2021

- Southeast Asian countries that are members of ASEAN group join the G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting for the first time ever today
- The Foreign Secretary will stress the importance of working with ASEAN and wants the UK to have a stronger relationship with the region to reflect its growing importance
- She will encourage her Southeast Asian counterparts to play a role in shaping global standards on cutting-edge tech

The G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting continues in Liverpool today [12th December], with Foreign Ministers from Southeast Asian countries joining the discussions for the first time.

The talks are aimed at forging closer tech, economic and security ties with the ten-nation ASEAN bloc. Today's discussions will take place at the Museum of Liverpool and Anfield, the home of Liverpool Football Club, with most ASEAN foreign ministers joining virtually. The Foreign Secretary wants the UK to have a stronger relationship with the region to reflect its growing importance and believes deeper ties can be a win-win.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The first ever G7 meeting with ASEAN colleagues is a chance to strengthen our trade, economic, technology and security ties with Southeast Asia.

By joining forces and bringing freedom-loving nations together we can ensure our links are not underpowered and properly reflect the region's size and importance. Deeper ties can be a win-win delivering jobs and opportunities for British people while ensuring an open, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

As the UK tackles the challenges of the future with the economies of the future, Truss will encourage her Southeast Asian counterparts to play a role in shaping global standards on cutting-edge tech.

The G7 and ASEAN will discuss working together to ensure the free flow of data while stamping out pernicious practices like intellectual property theft and cybercrime.

The Foreign Secretary will also back setting standards for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace and promote UK-backed cyber capacity that is steadily growing in the ASEAN region.

The crisis in Myanmar will be discussed during the meeting. The Myanmar military was not invited to attend the event.

The UK condemns the military coup in Myanmar, the violence against the people of Myanmar and the detention of members of the civilian government and civil society, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint. Working through the UN and NGOs the UK has already provided humanitarian assistance to over half a million people since the coup in February and will continue to work closely with ASEAN on our shared ambition of ending the crisis in Myanmar.

Today's meeting follows the launch of British International Investment last month, which will invest billions in infrastructure and technology across Asia. Two landmark deals were also announced at COP26 in November, pledging support of up to £110 million of honest, reliable finance for sustainable infrastructure projects in ASEAN; and a further £274 million for the wider region to strengthen climate resilience.

Foreign Secretary pledges to support 1.8 million Afghans with life-saving aid: 12 December 2021

- UK pledges £75m of emergency aid at the G7 Foreign & Development Ministers' Meeting in Liverpool.
- UK will provide over 1.8 million people with food, health services, shelter and water.
- G7 Ministers discussing how to tackle the growing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan at this weekend's meeting.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is to pledge £75m of UK emergency aid to the Afghan people to provide life-saving food, and emergency health services as well as shelter, water and hygiene services.

This vital aid will go through the UN and other trusted delivery partners and will help respond to the worsening humanitarian situation.

The UK's pledge follows G7 discussions on global crisis and conflict situations yesterday (Saturday, 11 December), including in Afghanistan, where the Foreign Secretary called for greater international cooperation to prevent serious risks of migration, regional instability and humanitarian crises.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The UK is providing vital humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan

this winter. The funds announced today will save lives, protect women and girls and support stability in the region. We are determined to do all we can for the people of Afghanistan.

The UK support is part of the £286 million it has pledged to give to Afghanistan this year. It will also be used to provide support for victims of gender-based violence and to fund essential child protection services. Aid agencies will prioritise those most at risk including households headed by women and disabled people.

The UK funding will be channelled through the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, World Food Programme, International Organisation for Migration, United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and International Rescue Committee. No funding will go directly to the Taliban.

WFP Executive Director, David Beasley said:

What we are seeing on the ground is heart-breaking – 23 million people are facing severe hunger in a country crippled by drought, conflict and an economic crisis.

Women and children are bearing the brunt of this suffering and, as the harsh winter descends, more and more are slipping into malnutrition and starvation each day. The World Food Programme welcomes this donation from the British people and Government which will help us save many lives.

The UK continues to work with international partners to tackle the humanitarian crisis, preserve regional stability, protect the gains of the last 20 years and to stress to the Taliban the essential need for Afghan girls of all ages to go back to school.

At a session yesterday on Afghanistan the G7 Foreign Ministers discussed taking a coordinated international response to the growing crisis in the country. Foreign ministers also talked about how to engage with the Taliban.

Later today the Foreign Secretary will also have discussions with Foreign Ministers from the Southeast Asian group ASEAN, who are attending the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting for the first time, most of them virtually. She will stress the importance of working with Southeast Asia's 'economies of the future' to tackle the challenges of today.

[Foreign Secretary's meeting with](#)

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian: 11 December 2021

Press release

A readout of the Foreign Secretary's meeting with French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian.



A spokesperson from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said:

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss met French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian today in Liverpool during the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting.

As fellow free-market democracies with historic ties, they agreed that the UK and France must make common cause in promoting freedom and democracy globally and challenging aggressors like Russia. The Foreign Secretary stressed the need for a practical, pragmatic approach to bilateral issues like migration, fishing rights and trade.

They discussed cooperation in the Sahel, and agreed on the importance of deepening economic, security and development ties with allies and working together to boost economic growth in low and middle income countries.

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Latest update on licensing discussions with the European Union

News story

Latest statement in response to discussions between the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and European Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius



A UK Government Spokesperson said:

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs spoke last night to European Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius, following several weeks of intensive technical discussions on licensing.

Throughout this process, the UK's approach has been evidence-based and in line with our commitments under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). We have licensed vessels where sufficient evidence has been provided that demonstrates that a vessel qualifies for access under the TCA. Where that evidence has not been provided, licences have not been issued.

On direct replacement vessels, we have taken an approach in line with the TCA which provides stability and ensures the sustainability of our fisheries. Last night, following receipt of new evidence from the Commission, the UK licensed 18 replacement vessels on the basis of this methodology. Further technical work on 7 more licences for direct replacement vessels is scheduled to conclude on Monday.

Jersey has today announced that it can, following receipt of new data this week, issue permanent licences to an additional 5 qualifying vessels currently on temporary licences. This will take the total permanent licences issued by Jersey to 130.

This now concludes this phase of intensive talks on licensing.

[F1 stars including Lewis Hamilton back COVID-19 vaccine drive](#)

- Formula 1 (F1) drivers Lewis Hamilton, Lando Norris and George Russell and CEO of F1 Group Stefano Domenicali, urge fans to get the COVID-19 vaccine this winter
- A new short film encourages fans to play their part and get boosted
- Campaign comes as the over 40s can now have top-up jab 3 months after second dose
- The film is released ahead of the F1 season finale in Abu Dhabi

Formula 1's biggest stars have backed the UK's vaccine rollout and urged all fans to get their jab as soon as possible this winter in a new film out today (Saturday 11 December).

The film shows current champion Lewis Hamilton, and other F1 drivers Lando Norris and George Russell, ask fans to play their part and get their COVID-19 vaccine.

[Watch the new film](#)

Stefano Domenicali, CEO of F1 Group, also features in the film, telling fans he has received his booster jab and encouraging everyone who is eligible to get theirs.

This comes as the booster programme is accelerated this week, with people aged over 40 in England now able to book their booster a month in advance – 2 months after their second dose – following the government halving the dosing gap between second doses and boosters to just 6 months.

Vaccines are the best way to protect people against COVID-19 and, in light of the new Omicron variant and following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the government is expanding the booster programme to all adults over 18, with all those eligible in England being offered a top-up jab by the end of January.

To speed up the vaccination programme, around 450 military personnel will be drafted in to support deployment, with 1,500 community pharmacy sites,

additional hospital hubs, and pop-up sites opening in convenient locations across the country. Extra financial support to GPs, community pharmacies and primary care staff will help boost capacity and encourage more visits to those who are housebound.

Stefano Domenicali, Formula 1 CEO said:

Vaccines and boosters are out way out of this pandemic, and we need to keep everyone safe and move forward together. I have had my vaccine and my booster and ask everyone to do the same. Formula 1 is moving ahead, and we ask for everyone to play their part.

The government's priority remains to protect the most vulnerable first so everyone over the age of 40 who received their second dose at least 3 months ago now able to book an appointment for their booster jab.

Younger age groups will be invited by the NHS in order of age in due course.

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

Boosters remain the best defence against the new variant and the virus, and we are bolstering the booster programme to get more jabs in arms more quickly.

It is fantastic to see F1 drivers playing their part, encouraging others to get their top up jab to secure the vital protection they need as the virus goes on the advance this winter.

More than 21 million people have received their booster jab and I urge all those eligible to come forward, roll up their sleeves and get protected as soon as they can.

Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms and are even more unlikely to get serious COVID-19, to be admitted to hospital, or to die from it.

The offer of a first and second COVID-19 vaccine remains open to anyone who is eligible. Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England.

The first real-world study on the effectiveness of booster vaccines against the Delta variant by the UK Health Security Agency shows top-up jabs boost protection back up to over 90% against symptomatic COVID-19 in adults aged over 50, 2 weeks after being vaccinated. Data from the CovBoost trial shows the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines being used in the UK as boosters give the best overall immune response.

The most recent data suggests that Omicron has a very high growth rate and is

spreading rapidly. Recent laboratory data suggests that there is lower immunity against Omicron from vaccination when compared to the Delta variant, so that 2 doses of a vaccine is less effective at reducing transmission in the community, and early research published by Pfizer suggests that a third dose of the Pfizer vaccine neutralised the Omicron variant to levels that are similar to the impact of 2 doses against the original strain of the virus.

The government will continue to look closely at all the emerging data but vaccines remain the best line of defence and it is now more vital than ever that those who are unvaccinated come forward, and those eligible for their boosters book when called.

Flu is another winter virus that can be serious. To give people the best protection over winter, those eligible for a free flu vaccine should come forward and book an appointment at either their GP practice or their local pharmacy, or take it up when offered by their employer or other healthcare provider.

The government is running a nationwide advertising campaign, encouraging people eligible to get their booster and flu jabs to protect themselves and their loved ones and help reduce pressures on the NHS. This includes outdoor billboards, broadcast and community radio and TV.

Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England.

For further information please contact vaccines@freuds.com.