

Foreign Secretary's meeting with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock: 10 December 2021

News story

A readout from Foreign Secretary Liz Truss' meeting with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock.



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

The Foreign Secretary Liz Truss was delighted to meet new German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock in Liverpool ahead of the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting and congratulated her on her appointment.

She reiterated the importance of the UK-Germany partnership.

The Ministers agreed on the importance of defending and advancing freedom and democracy and the need to stand up to autocratic regimes that threaten the free world.

They discussed a number of priorities including the importance of the G7 countries presenting a united front in the face of Russia's ongoing threat to Ukraine.

Both agreed on a shared ambition for a pragmatic solution to issues around the Northern Ireland Protocol that works for the people of Northern Ireland.

On migration both said it was a global problem that required the breaking up of human trafficking gangs and upstream development investment to tackle the drivers of migration.

Minister Baerbock thanked the Foreign Secretary for the UK's ambitious programme during its presidency of the G7. The Foreign

Secretary said she was handing over the baton and looked forward to working closely with the Foreign Minister during Germany's G7 presidency next year.

Published 11 December 2021

[Foreign Secretary's meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken](#)

News story

A readout of the Foreign Secretary Liz Truss' meeting with US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken on 10 December 2021.



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

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss met US Secretary of State Antony Blinken ahead of the G7 Foreign And Development Ministers' Meeting in Liverpool.

Both agreed their support for Ukraine and expressed deep concern about the build-up of Russian troops on Ukraine's border. In addition they said that any incursion by Russia would be a strategic mistake for which there would be serious consequences.

The Foreign Secretary and Secretary Blinken both agreed on the importance of defending and promoting freedom and democracy and the need for a unity of purpose from the G7 to achieve this.

In discussions over 'Build Back Better World' the Foreign Secretary welcomed this initiative and stressed how the UK's new British International Investment will provide reliable and honest tech and

infrastructure finance to lower and middle-income countries.

The need for Iran to meaningfully engage on a nuclear deal was stressed.

Both also agreed to further cooperation in areas like tech and security with each other and with like-minded partners.

Published 11 December 2021

[Liz Truss hosts G7 in show of unity against global aggressors](#)

- Liz Truss will host G7 Foreign Ministers in Liverpool this weekend, in the UK's final in-person meeting in its year as G7 president
- Last week the Foreign Secretary called on the G7 to advance "the frontiers of freedom" in a speech at Chatham House
- Truss will urge the G7 to agree on the importance of common principles to improve investment in the developing world, boost security and improve tech standards

Liz Truss will bring the world's most influential democracies together in a show of unity against global aggressors this weekend as she hosts the G7 in Liverpool from today (Saturday, 11 December).

The Foreign Secretary will urge G7 Foreign and Development Ministers to present a united front against malign behaviour – including Russian posturing towards Ukraine – and to pledge security and economic support to defend 'the frontiers of freedom' around the world.

This call follows pledges by NATO allies to stand up to Russian aggression on the Ukrainian border, warning any incursion by Russia will be a serious strategic error and yield severe consequences.

The meetings today will also include discussion around ongoing crises in Myanmar and Ethiopia, and the Iran nuclear talks, with G7 leaders expected to agree that Iran should stop its nuclear escalation and seize this opportunity to return to the JCPOA.

At the G7 Leaders' Summit in Carbis Bay, members agreed that to help developing countries close the infrastructure gap, investment must be values-driven, collaborative, and market-led, with a focus on maintaining strong standards, enhancing multilateral finance and fostering strategic partnerships. This weekend's meeting is an opportunity to build on that commitment.

Liz Truss will push for a common set of standards based on freedom and democracy.

She will talk about the importance of democracies providing more clean and reliable finance for infrastructure and technology projects around the world, offering an alternative to unsustainable debt from non-market economies.

Last month the Foreign Secretary launched British International Investment to boost financing into developing countries across Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, and wants other countries to follow suit.

UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

This weekend the world's most influential democracies will take a stand against aggressors who seek to undermine liberty and send a clear message that we are a united front.

I want G7 countries to deepen ties in areas like trade, investment, technology and security so we can defend and advance freedom and democracy across the world. I will be pushing that point over the next few days.

In her first major speech as Foreign Secretary at Chatham House in London this week, the Foreign Secretary said "we need to be on the front foot with our friends across the free world, because the battle for economic influence is already in full flow".

She wants the UK and its partners to offer developing countries more reliable alternatives, when it comes to finance and infrastructure, so they are not dependent on just one country.

She noted that 44 low and middle-income countries have debts to Beijing in excess of 10% of their GDP.

Over the course of the weekend, the Foreign Secretary will hold bilateral meetings with her counterparts from the G7 countries and the EU, as well as guest countries joining the event.

On Sunday, the Foreign Secretary will host plenary sessions on global health security as well as the Indo-Pacific region, with Foreign Ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations joining the G7 Meeting for the first time ever.

The Foreign Secretary will also launch the Africa Resilience Investment Accelerator this weekend. The UK-led initiative brings together G7 development finance institutions to support greater collaboration when investing in Africa's most fragile markets. It will work to tackle barriers to develop a pipeline of investable opportunities and share best practice and lessons learned from investing in such markets. It will help the G7 to meet its commitment to invest over \$80 billion into the private sector in Africa over the next five years to support sustainable economic recovery and growth.

The UK is working to ensure the event in the Museum of Liverpool is Covid secure with all overseas delegates having to take a PCR test before attending. There will also be daily on-site testing.

This is the second in-person gathering of G7 Foreign Ministers this year, following May's Meeting in London, as part of the UK's year-long G7 Presidency.

Notes to editors

- The G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting will take place at The Museum of Liverpool on December 11 and 12.
- Tomorrow, countries from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will also participate in the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting for the first time, a sign of the growing importance of the region.
- Guest countries – Republic of Korea, Australia, South Africa and India – all participated in the G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting earlier this year, with the Republic of Korea and Australia attending in person in Liverpool. A number of guest countries will be participating virtually.
- Liverpool has a rich maritime history and has played a pivotal role in international trade. It has fostered global links through its diverse communities and has had an immense musical and sporting impact worldwide.
- Last month the Foreign Secretary relaunched the UK's development finance institution as British International Investment (BII). This will invest billions in infrastructure and technology in low- and middle-income countries across Asia, Africa and the Caribbean and will be a key part of the government's wider plans to mobilise up to £8 billion a year of public and private sector investment in international projects by 2025.

Government targets unsafe products online in run-up to Christmas

- Government is examining more than 1,000 products to help ensure gifts given at Christmas are safe for families
- 12,500 unsafe products, including toys, have been removed from supply so far this year alone, and testing continues through the festive period
- shoppers encouraged to check for warning signs to stay safe this Christmas

The UK government is testing more than 1,000 products to help ensure gifts given at Christmas are safe for families, Consumer Minister Paul Scully has announced today (Saturday 11 December).

The products, including toys, are from third-party sellers on online marketplaces and the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is

ensuring they meet the UK's high standards for product safety, or else ensuring that they are removed from sale. If any dangerous or faulty products are identified, OPSS will contact the online marketplace to have them taken down so that Christmas gifts are safe. Consumers will be able to return products and receive a refund.

OPSS has identified goods such as toys, cosmetics and electricals that can pose particular risks. The products are checked for correct labelling and packaging and any which fail are sent away to a testing house for further investigation.

Today's announcement is the next step in enforcement action that has already seen 12,500 products removed from supply so far in 2021. OPSS officials also undertake direct enforcement action alongside Local Authority Trading Standards and Border Force.

Consumer Minister Paul Scully said:

No parent should have to worry about the safety of the toys they've bought their kids at Christmas. Sadly, there are greater threats than finding a lump of coal under the tree on Christmas morning which is why we're pulling out all the stops to keep everyone safe.

The UK has some of the highest product safety standards in the world and we're hard at work to ensure nothing from the naughty list makes its way into Santa's sleigh this Christmas.

Martyn Allen, Technical Director at Electrical Safety First (ESF), said:

We welcome this enforcement activity from OPSS, particularly in the run up to Christmas when so many people are using Online Marketplaces to buy gifts for their loved ones. ESF is pleased to be working closely with OPSS to help identify and raise awareness of the serious safety issues, including simple checks the public can make to help ensure the products they buy are safe.

Mike Andrews, National Co-ordinator at the National Trading Standards eCrime Team, said:

Many of us will be doing our Christmas shopping online this year and so it's vital we remember there are online fraudsters out there tempting us with deals for dangerous products. Consumers should be on their guard when shopping online and check the website to ensure it is genuine before making a purchase. If you suspect products are unsafe, report the seller and the website to the Citizens Advice Scams Action service on 0808 250 5050.

How to stay safe when buying toys this Christmas

Shoppers are encouraged to stay safe when buying toys this Christmas. Steps you can take to protect you and your loved ones include:

Knowing who you are buying from

Get as much information on the seller as you can, especially if you're buying from an online marketplace. Not everything advertised on an online platform is sold by them. If the actual seller is based overseas or fails to provide an address, there are greater risks.

Always reading the warnings and instructions

Toys must be clearly marked with age restrictions, which are based on risks such as choking hazards. Always follow the age recommendations.

Looking out for hazards and checking for button batteries

Small parts and loose ribbons can pose choking and strangulation hazards. Ensure any button batteries in a toy are safely behind a screwed-down flap.

Comparing the sellers

Bargains may be too good to be true. Compare the toy's price with other sellers. If it's a fraction of the cost, it could be a counterfeit.

Checking for product recalls

[See if the toy you're buying has been recalled](#). It is the manufacturer or retailer's responsibility to notify the public if any unsafe product is recalled, but we encourage consumers to check this web page regularly for important product safety information.

Additional Information

Following a [call for evidence](#) earlier this year, the government has committed to consult on regulatory changes to address these issues including ensuring that the responsibilities of online marketplaces are clear and there is greater accountability for products sold in the UK.

In November OPSS issued an [Important Product Safety Message](#), reminding the public to check who they are buying from and providing a safety checklist for purchases.

OPSS is running a Christmas Toys product safety information campaign in the run up to Christmas, which includes warnings about button batteries, small powerful magnets, and the heightened risk of buying online from a seller outside the UK.

Last summer, the government launched a [consultation on further measures to protect consumers from online rip-offs](#). This includes tackling bogus online

reviews by making it illegal to pay someone to write or host, a fake review, and helping regulators stamp out other unscrupulous tactics like businesses paying to have their product feature highly on a trader's website while hiding the fact they paid for such placement.

Prioritisation, protection and prevention allows flexible responses to humanitarian crises

Thank you Mr President and good afternoon colleagues.

Every year, member states gather here in the General Assembly Hall to review the global humanitarian picture, reflect on the year that has been and look ahead to future challenges.

But, having sat here a year ago and having listened to member states throughout the morning, there are a number of recurring themes that are, sadly, all too familiar:

Escalating and unprecedented levels of need;

More crises, in more places, lasting longer than before;

And demand for humanitarian assistance increasingly outstripping resources.

As conflict, climate change and COVID19 continue to drive and dominate humanitarian crises, it is patently clear that we are heading in the wrong direction.

We need to see a shift in the way we work – building new partnerships and developing tools to better address and anticipate humanitarian crises.

The UK approach going into 2022 will focus on three pillars: prioritisation, protection and prevention.

Firstly, we need to prioritise the delivery of effective humanitarian assistance to people in greatest need. This means ensuring responses better reflect the needs and voices of affected populations, as well as promoting humanitarian responses that are accountable, data-driven and cost effective.

Secondly, we need to protect the safety, dignity and rights of individuals in situations of conflict and crisis, especially women and girls, who are disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence and abuse. We will protect and champion the importance of humanitarian principles, norms and standards, whilst calling out those belligerents disregarding international humanitarian law and preventing populations from accessing the critical

assistance they need.

And, finally, we need to prevent today's problems from turning into tomorrow's crises.

The UK will push for a shift among multilateral, IFI, development, peacebuilding and humanitarian partners to better prevent, anticipate and prepare for new crises, and rebuild resilience in protracted and recurrent crises.

This will include increasing investments in monitoring and early warning systems and prearranged finance to anticipate and act ahead of shocks and, in so doing, reduce the scale and impact of humanitarian crises.

Innovation, data and technology are at the heart of tackling these issues, and acting early. The UK will continue to lead in this area, using our world-class capabilities to ensure aid agencies are able to plan and prepare for disasters, improving the chances of saving lives and reducing suffering.

Mr President,

As we continue to face the combined effects of conflict, climate and COVID-19, we need to see a holistic multilateral response.

This means harnessing big data and artificial intelligence, and the expertise of the private sector. It means aiming the power of climate finance at the most fragile contexts. It means the UN is making the full use of all the levers at its disposal, with development, peace and political actors all playing their role in preventing crises.

Since 2015, the UK has provided over £11.1bn in humanitarian funding to support the world's most vulnerable people.

We are protecting our life saving humanitarian spend at around £1 billion a year.

But with needs rapidly outstripping available resources, it is vital we find new means to meet these challenges and use funding in smarter, more efficient ways.

By focussing on prioritisation, protection and prevention, we will be able to fund more nimble and flexible responses to humanitarian crises.

The UK is investing in earlier interventions to prevent further suffering, reduce growing humanitarian needs and ensure funding goes further.

We call on all member states gathered here today to do the same.

Thank you.