

Strengthening women's resilience and leadership as a path to peace in regions plagued by armed groups

Thank you, President. Let me thank the Deputy Secretary General and all our briefers today for your testimony, your advocacy and your leadership.

As we mark the anniversary of Resolution 1325, the UK is proud to be a leading champion of the Women Peace and Security agenda in the UN and around the world. And yet the stark reality presented by our briefers speaks for itself. Despite our collective efforts of 22 years, we all need to do more to deliver on the promise of 1325. Today I'd like to highlight three of our priorities.

First it is clear that we need to strengthen the global response to conflict-related sexual violence. A 20% increase in sexual violence against children and a 41% increase in the abduction of girls as reported in the Secretary General's 2022 report on children in armed conflict cannot be ignored.

That is why the UK will host an International Conference on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict on 28-29 November. We will gather countries together to galvanise the response to CRSV, and we will launch a political declaration to send a strong message that we will support survivors, help prevent future violence, and hold perpetrators to account. We urge member states to endorse this declaration, and make a national commitment outlining practical steps they will take to prevent and respond to CRSV, for example implementing the Murad Code.

Second, we continue to support women's participation in peace efforts. Women are integral to building lasting peace and security, and their full, equal and meaningful participation in peace processes is the cornerstone of our approach to WPS. But progress here has been too slow as we've heard today.

There has been no significant increase in women's participation in peace processes since 2000, despite all the rhetoric. So the UK's fifth WPS National Action Plan will focus on concrete and practical ways to reflect the contribution women make to peace in a changed strategic environment, from Afghanistan to Ukraine, from climate security to cyber threats.

Third, President, we need to create an enabling environment for women to participate. A major barrier to women's engagement in political life is the rising risk of reprisals. The Secretary-General's latest WPS report highlights that since 2018, over a third of the women briefers to the Security Council have faced reprisals. This is simply not acceptable. The UK is committed to protecting women human rights defenders and briefers who courageously speak in this chamber. In partnership with OHCHR, we developed Guidance for Member States to mitigate reprisals against civil society briefers.

President, Women's place at the peace table is not only their right, it is essential to building and sustaining peace and security. Every absence will be our collective loss.

Thank you.

[Government Office for Technology Transfer launches with events in London and Manchester](#)

The science, innovation and business community came together this week at London's Royal Institution and Manchester's Science and Industry Museum to launch [the Government Office for Technology Transfer \(GOTT\)](#).

GOTT, which forms part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), has been established to unlock the value of public sector knowledge assets, estimated to be worth over £106 billion, delivering economic, social and financial outcomes for the UK economy and taxpayers.

Science and Investment Security Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

The UK is an exceptional research, knowledge and innovation base, cementing its position as a genuine global science superpower.

However, British discoveries are too often brought to market elsewhere, taking the expertise and financial benefits from UK research to foreign economies.

This is why the work of excellent new Government Office for Technology Transfer, launching today, will be so important. I look forward to seeing this new office work to commercialise the UK's outstanding home-grown knowledge assets to benefit our country's economy, society, and position as an Innovation Nation.

GOTT CEO Dr Alison Campbell said:

I'm delighted to be able to mark the launch of the Government Office for Technology Transfer – as a dedicated team with a cross-government remit, it's a first of its kind.

Our purpose is to raise awareness across government of the value of intangible knowledge assets and to provide practical advice and support to enable such opportunities to be properly exploited.

There is a wealth of knowledge, resources and intellectual property across the portfolio of government investments that has the power to drive innovation across business and the public sector. There are already many exciting examples of how these are contributing to the British economy. We want to enhance the scale and pace of knowledge asset development across the public sector.

Headquartered in Salford, GOTT hosted the second of its 2 launch events on Thursday at Manchester's Science and Industry Museum, where BEIS Non-Executive Board Member, Vikas Shah, joined Alison Campbell to welcome invitees from the innovation ecosystem in the North, as well as showcasing the city as a centre for government innovation.

About the Government Office for Tech Transfer

GOTT, which is led by Dr Alison Campbell, sits within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and has a cross-government mandate to supercharge the identification, development and exploitation of public sector knowledge assets and to encourage the public sector to be more innovative and entrepreneurial in how it manages its own assets.

Knowledge assets include know-how, data, brands, business processes, expert resources and technology. Technology transfer is about sharing these assets with other organisations to stimulate innovation and the development of new products, processes and services and the creation of new commercial ventures.

GOTT has already begun to work with the public sector on innovations such as a cheaper higher intensity Vacuum Ultra-Violet (VUV) light source to purify water and the use of graphene biosensors to detect different health conditions and diseases using biomarkers in the human body.

Through providing both funding and expertise, GOTT will support projects such as these across government. It will also work with organisations that have a mature technology transfer capability to identify areas of synergy and best practice.

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UK Sanctions Iran over kamikaze Russian drones

- UK measures target Russian drone supplies used to attack civilian targets and critical infrastructure in Ukraine
- Today's sanctions target Iranians responsible for supplying Russia with kamikaze drones

- Procurement is further evidence of Iran's destabilising role in global security and a clear violation of a UN Security Council Resolution

The UK is today (October 20) implementing new sanctions on Iranian individuals and business responsible for supplying Russia with kamikaze drones used to bombard Ukraine.

Russia is using the drones to attack both civilian targets and critical infrastructure in Kyiv and across Ukraine, with the intention of cutting off Ukrainian people from energy, heating, and water.

By supplying these drones Iran is actively warmongering, profiting off Russia's abhorrent attacks on Ukrainian citizens, and adding to the suffering of the people and the destruction of critical infrastructure. Both Russia and Iran are violating a UN Security Council Resolution that controls the transfer of these weapons from Iran.

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said:

Iran's support for Putin's brutal and illegal war against Ukraine is deplorable. Today we are sanctioning those who have supplied the drones used by Russia to target Ukrainian civilians. This is clear evidence of Iran's destabilising role in global security.

These cowardly drone strikes are an act of desperation. By enabling these strikes, these individuals and a manufacturer have caused the people of Ukraine untold suffering. We will ensure that they are held to account for their actions.

Today's sanctions target the individuals and business personally responsible for providing the drones that have been used in these barbaric strikes. They are:

- Major General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri – the Chairman of the armed forces General Staff who has overseen the army branches supplying Russia with drones. Bagheri is subject to an asset freeze and travel ban
- Brigadier General Seyed Hojjatollah Qureishi – the key Iranian negotiator in the deal that has provided Russia with the Iranian produced drones. Qureishi is subject to an asset freeze and travel ban
- Brigadier General Saeed Aghajani – the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a branch of the Iranian armed forces, Aerospace Force UAV Command – the IRGC are reported to have been in the temporarily controlled territories of Ukraine advising Russian forces on how to use the drones. Aghajani is subject to an asset freeze and travel ban.
- Shahed Aviation Industries – the Iranian manufacturer of the Shahed drones which have been used by Russia during its illegal invasion of Ukraine. Shahed Aviation Industries is subject to an asset freeze.

Procuring these weapons shows Russia is turning to countries such as Iran out

of desperation in order to continue fighting their illegal war.

Open-source evidence has shown Russia's own defence company and drone producer Kronshtadt struggle to maintain production since they were sanctioned (24 March 2022), with fridges and dishwashers being cannibalised in order to create military equipment, and Soviet-era tanks have also been sent to the front line as they strain to maintain their military equipment.

Background

The UK has previously designated close to 300 Iranian individuals and entities for their role in weapons proliferation, human rights abuses, and terrorism. These include those involved in Iran's drone programme, including Iran's Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Logistics and the Iran Aviation Industries Organisation and its subsidiaries including Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Company and Qods Aviation Industry and individuals including Amir Hajizadeh, the IRGC Aerospace Force Commander.

Iran has one of the largest and most diverse drone and missile arsenals in the Middle East and continues to increase the sophistication, range and accuracy of its weapons systems. It also has a long-standing track record of proliferating drones, missiles and missile technology, including to non-state actors. The missiles and drones are under the control of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Iran's and Russia's action violates UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which provides that the transfer from, or to, Iran of specified items require prior approval from the Security Council.

In response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, the UK and our international partners have implemented the most severe package of sanctions ever imposed on a major economy. The UK has sanctioned over 1,200 individuals and 120 entities since the start of the invasion as well as introducing unprecedented trade measures.

Asset freeze

An asset freeze prevents any UK citizen, or any business in the UK, from dealing with any funds or economic resources which are owned, held or controlled by the designated person. UK financial sanctions apply to all persons within the territory and territorial sea of the UK and to all UK persons, wherever they are in the world. It also prevents funds or economic resources being provided to or for the benefit of the designated person.

Travel ban

A travel ban means that the designated person must be refused leave to enter or to remain in the United Kingdom, providing the individual is an excluded person under section 8B of the Immigration Act 1971.

Transport sanctions

Recently introduced powers make it a criminal offence for any Russian

aircraft to fly or land in the UK and give the government powers to remove aircraft belonging to designated Russian individuals and entities from the UK aircraft register, even if the sanctioned individual is not on board. Russian ships are also banned from UK ports.

[Dounreay recycles 98% of reactor decommissioning waste](#)

News story

The site's oldest reactor, the Dounreay Materials Test Reactor, is leading the way in demolition waste recycling as internal dismantling continues.



[Dounreay Materials Test Reactor vessel decommissioning](#)

The fuel element storage block has now been demolished. This steel tank was 4.7m high and 2.8m in diameter, surrounded by an iron-shot concrete cylinder, and was capped off by a thick steel top plate. Historically it housed cooling irradiated fuel elements after their removal from the reactor.

During its dismantling, workers segregated recyclable and re-usable material from the waste products. An expected 9 tonnes of steel and 33 tonnes of lead will be recycled, and around 95 tonnes of concrete will be re-used off site.

Facility Manager Donald Buchanan said:

We have applied waste minimisation techniques which require all waste to be segregated and characterised, in compliance with the Scottish Government's zero waste plan. Some of these materials, which previously might have been disposed of as waste, can now be considered as a valuable resource.

We have carried out a robust programme of characterisation and sampling work to determine the appropriate disposal options and as

a result we will be able to recycle and re-use the majority of the material. Only 2% of the waste produced will be disposed of in our low level waste vaults.

Cavendish Nuclear and sub-contractors KDC Demolition, JGC Engineering & Technical Services and Caithness Scaffolding are carrying out the work.

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[Putin stands alone on the international stage: UK statement to the OSCE](#)

Thank you Mr Chair. Russia's actions in Ukraine in recent weeks have dropped to new lows. The increased tempo of long-range strikes, including the use of Shahed-136 drones, against Ukraine's civilian population and infrastructure have resulted in further tragic loss of life. And extensive areas of Ukraine have been left without power supply ahead of winter. Mr Chair, this cruelty has no excuse. It only reflects one man's desperation – Vladimir Putin – desperate as he is losing the war and desperate as he wishes to distract from what is happening on the battlefield. And – as a result – civilians are paying the highest price.

Since this Council last met, the Belarusian regime announced that 70,000 Belarusian troops would be part of a regional "group of forces" created under the false guise of "protecting" its border from external threats. This regional military grouping, which includes thousands of Russian troops, is a further attempt at distraction and misdirection – misjudged actions which only serve to strengthen the international community's opposition to Putin's illegal war in Ukraine and further isolate Russia and Belarus.

Mr Chair – I want to focus this week's intervention on [the recent vote at the UN General Assembly](#), the UN Charter and OSCE principles and commitments.

The strength of the international community's resolve was recently demonstrated at the United Nations General Assembly on 12 October when, in the face of President Putin's unprovoked aggression, 143 nations across the globe came together in defence of the UN Charter and in solidarity with Ukraine. The UN General Assembly vote is a powerful demonstration of condemnation of Russia's outrageous and illegal attempts to annex the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia.

The vote was an important show of international unity against an aggressor

that seeks to destabilise the international norms that protect us all. It is indisputable evidence of what we have known for some time – Putin stands alone on the international stage and his actions are driving his country further into self-inflicted isolation. It also demonstrates that the world will not stand by as Russia tramples on the obligations enshrined in the UN Charter, including that no threat or use of force shall be made against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.

Yesterday, President Putin made another announcement – this time declaring martial law in those areas under temporary Russia control within Ukraine. Martial law will mean further ruthless attempts to enforce control in territory to which Russia has no right, and over people who have already suffered heavily at the hands of Russian forces. Despite what the Kremlin tells us, these moves highlight Russia's increasing desperation in the midst of its failing invasion. On Kherson, Russia's plans to forcibly deport Ukrainian civilians are deeply concerning. We remind Russia that any danger posed to civilians is a direct result of its illegal invasion.

On OSCE principles and commitments – we must not allow Russia to disregard what we have all signed up to in this Forum. Putin has contravened the principles and commitments made by all OSCE participating States in the [1975 Helsinki Final Act](#) time and time again. To name but a few – (i) sovereign equality and respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty; (ii) refraining from the threat or use of force; (iii) the inviolability of frontiers; (iv) territorial integrity of states; (v) respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms – the list goes on.

The real-world repercussions for Ukraine of such blatant disregard for OSCE principles can be seen in the recent reports by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR):

- Over seven and a half million Ukrainian refugees across Europe;
- Seven million displaced people within Ukraine;
- 6,306 civilian deaths, including 397 children; and
- 9,602 civilian injuries, including 723 children.

The true numbers are thought to be much higher and they are rising. According to the UN, most of the civilian casualties recorded were caused by the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects, including shelling from heavy artillery, multiple launch rocket systems, missiles and air strikes. Russia's barbaric and callous tactics are a throwback to a history which should have been learned from and never repeated again.

Russia should end this war. It should cease its assault on Ukraine and it should withdraw its forces from the entire territory of Ukraine. The targeting of civilians and of civilian infrastructure may cause blackouts, but – as we are seeing – Russia's assaults are not breaking the steadfast resolve of the people of Ukraine, nor the UK, nor the international community's absolute and unwavering support of them. We will continue to defend what is right. We will continue to champion democracy. We will continue to uphold Ukraine's right to sovereignty, independence and freedom. Until and after Ukraine prevails.