

Providing children with the 'safety and security they all deserve'

I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for convening this vital Debate, and the briefers for your insightful presentations.

The Secretary-General's report shows that even 25 years on from the mandate, how far we still need to travel to end the suffering of children.

The scale and the severity of the violations committed against children is appalling.

I am particularly concerned about the increase in the countries already on the Council's agenda, like Somalia.

This reinforces the urgency of holding elections, so that the government can refocus on the country's many challenges, not least the protection of its children.

The United Kingdom stands ready to support Somalia, both bilaterally and through UN channels.

The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict must continue to hold parties-to-conflict to account for their actions.

I am particularly pleased to see Tatmadaw have been re-listed for recruitment of children. It is critical they implement the joint action plan on the non-recruitment of children signed in 2012.

Greater transparency on listing decisions would ensure the reputation of the UN's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism is not only sustained, but also strengthened.

I would also like to draw attention to the plight of the children in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

In the Tigray region of Ethiopia, children have been subjected to horrific sexual abuse. Unaccompanied minors have been forced to flee their homes as refugees, and according to IPC data, thousands of children now face famine.

Seven months on, there is no end to the conflict in sight, though we do continue to call for cessation.

In Mozambique we have reports of children being kidnapped and forcibly recruited, as well as horrific stories of beheadings of children as young as 11, by terrorist insurgents in Cabo Delgado.

I hope next year's report highlights these particular atrocities.

This year's report shows how the pandemic has disproportionately affected the

world's most vulnerable, and has been devastating for children in conflict.

COVID-19 has tested the resilience of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, which must continue its evidence-based approach, and rise above politics to focus on the interests of every child.

COVID-19 has also increased the challenge of accessing education in conflict.

Last week, I met with young people from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and the Occupied Palestine Territories.

The words of a young Afghan girl have stayed with me.

She said:

"When I was holding my pen and notebook in my hands and left for school with thousands of wishes, I was thinking 'I am one step closer to my dreams'. But, now, I am under the ground with all my dreams... What did I do wrong? Why was I your target?"

Her words should serve as a rallying cry for the Security Council to condemn the alarming increase in attacks on schools and in the abduction of and sexual violence against girls.

Colleagues here will know that girls' access to education is even lower in times of crisis. In losing access to school, girls not only lose the opportunity to learn, but also the protection that schools afford: from domestic violence, from early and forced marriage and, indeed, teenage pregnancy.

It is a matter of urgency that we incorporate gender perspectives into all our thinking about children in armed conflict.

The UK is committed to Leaving No Girls Behind, and 12 years of quality education by 2030.

More than ever, with the terrible impact of the pandemic, it is imperative that girls' education remains at the top of our collective agendas, so we can achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 by 2030.

Looking forward, and with the words of that young Afghan girl in mind, Members have a moral responsibility to maintain child protection across UN mandates, resolutions and sanctions and through special political missions, UN agencies and country teams.

I call upon all Members to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, on the involvement of children in armed conflict and to implement the Paris Principles, Safe Schools Declaration and Vancouver Principles.

These instruments demonstrate our commitment to listen to children, and to provide them with the safety and security they all deserve.

Helping advise on the pandemics of the future

A group of UKAEA Research Software Engineers and Advanced Computing specialists have played a major role in developing software and data that could help governments respond to the challenges of future pandemics.

The Scottish COVID-19 Response Consortium (SCRC) brought together over 150 epidemiologists, mathematical modellers, software engineers and other scientists to develop new computer models to assess strategies for controlling the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland and the UK in the medium and long term.

The Royal Society's RAMP Scheme gave the SCRC access to huge numbers of volunteers from research organisations and companies across the UK as part of the national COVID-19 response. UKAEA was the first external organisation to join the initiative in April 2020, with 11 staff taking part.

Experts from UKAEA and other organisations worked on the models to improve their structure and code quality, add functionality, set up automated tests and improve the performance of the software.

The SCRC code was developed on open software development platform Github and the consortium has developed a prototype data pipeline – a set of data management tools to store details of all input data, software versions, model runs and outputs and how they are related. This is essential to ensure traceability and quality control of all the elements that go into producing results that can feed into policy decisions. Another team developed a visualisation platform giving modellers insights into the raw data and modelling results.

It is hoped that these tools and approaches will improve the ability of epidemiologists to advise government, in the case of future pandemics.

UKAEA's Alys Brett is part of the SCRC core management group and was responsible for coordinating the software engineering effort.

She said: "The initial challenge was to channel this vast amount of enthusiastic and skilled volunteer effort without overwhelming the original model owners who had typically been the sole developer until this point. We paired each of them with a lead Research Software Engineer to get the project ready for team development and three of these leads were from our UKAEA team.

"This has been a fantastic example of what can be achieved by a modern, team-based approach to scientific software with modellers, Research Software Engineers, statisticians, visualisation teams and data experts working together without boundaries."

UKAEA Research Software Engineer, Peter Fox, said: “Working on this project has been both exciting and challenging. It has been very interesting to be involved from an early stage in a large-scale effort to address a problem of national importance.

“Obviously many challenges presented themselves – from getting up to speed with the terminology and practice of disease modelling, to working with a team of scientists and engineers from all over the country.”

This work is continuing under two research grants to take forward the data management and visualisation aspects. UKAEA is a core partner on the million pound grant to develop a FAIR data pipeline to make epidemiology data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. This enables engineers to address challenges that have close parallels for managing fusion research modelling data and workflows, in collaboration with colleagues at the Science & Technology Facilities Council’s Scientific Computing Department.

Current and past UKAEA contributors to the project are Rob Akers, Alys Brett, James Cook, Nathan Cummings, Peter Fox, Sanket Gadgil, Jonathan Hollocombe, Andrew Lahiff, John Nonweiler, Qingfeng Xia and Kristian Zarebski.

[UN Human Rights Council 47: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Adviser on Genocide Prevention](#)

We use some essential cookies to make this website work.

We’d like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services.

We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services.

[EU adopts ‘adequacy’ decisions allowing data to continue flowing freely to the UK](#)

- The European Union (EU) has formally recognised the UK’s high data

- protection standards after more than a year of constructive talks
- This will allow the continued seamless flow of personal data from the EU to the UK

Personal data can continue to flow freely between Europe and the UK following agreement by the European Union to adopt 'data adequacy' decisions.

The UK government welcomes the move, which rightly recognises the country's high data protection standards. Formal adoption of the decisions under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Law Enforcement Directive (LED) allows personal data to flow freely from the EU and wider European Economic Area (EEA) to the UK. The decisions mean that UK businesses and organisations can continue to receive personal data from the EU and EEA without having to put additional arrangements in place with European counterparts.

This free flow of personal data supports trade, innovation and investment, assists with law enforcement agencies tackling crime, and supports the delivery of critical public services sharing personal data as well as facilitating health and scientific research.

The UK, which now operates a fully independent data policy, has already recognised the EU and EEA member states as 'adequate', as part of its commitment to establish a smooth transition for the UK's departure from the bloc.

The government plans to promote the free flow of personal data globally and across borders, including through ambitious new trade deals and through new data adequacy agreements with some of the fastest growing economies, while ensuring people's data continues to be protected to a high standard.

All future decisions will be based on what maximises innovation and keeps up with evolving tech. As such, the government's approach will seek to minimise burdens on organisations seeking to use data to tackle some of the most pressing global issues, including climate change and the prevention of disease.

Secretary of State for Digital Oliver Dowden said:

After more than a year of constructive talks it is right the European Union has formally recognised the UK's high data protection standards.

This will be welcome news to businesses, support continued cooperation between the UK and the EU and help law enforcement authorities keep people safe.

We will now focus on unlocking the power of data to drive innovation and boost the economy while making sure we protect people's safety and privacy.

John Foster CBI Director of Policy said:

This breakthrough in the EU-UK adequacy decision will be welcomed by businesses across the country.

The free flow of data is the bedrock of the modern economy and essential for firms across all sectors– from automotive to logistics – playing an important role in everyday trade of goods and services.

This positive step will help us move forward as we develop a new trading relationship with the EU.

Julian David techUK CEO said:

Securing an EU-UK adequacy decision has been a top priority for techUK and the wider tech industry since the day after the 2016 referendum. The decision that the UK's data protection regime offers an equivalent level of protection to the EU GDPR is a vote of confidence in the UK's high data protection standards and is of vital importance to UK-EU trade as the free flow of data is essential to all business sectors.

The data adequacy decision also provides a basis for the UK and EU to work together on global routes for the free flow of data with trust, building on the G7 Digital and Technology declaration and possibly unlocking €2 trillion of growth.

The UK must also now move to complete the development of its own international data transfer regime in order to allow companies in the UK not just to exchange data with the EU, but also to be able to access opportunities across the world.

Notes to editors

Read the [European Commission's press statement](#)

Read the [GDPR decision](#)

Read the [Law Enforcement Directive decision](#)

Contact the DCMS press office on 020 7211 2210

[Joint statement from UK Secretary of](#)

State Kwasi Kwarteng and the Norwegian Minister for Energy and Petroleum Tina Bru

Today (28 June 2021), the UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Kwasi Kwarteng, and the Norwegian Energy Minister, Tina Bru, held their first in-person meeting in Oslo.

The ministers issued a joint statement affirming the importance of the bilateral energy relationship, as both countries seek to build back better from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and tackle climate change.

Joint statement

Energy is at the core of the close relationship between the United Kingdom and Norway. We are now embarking on a fresh, exciting chapter, establishing a new phase of cross-border energy cooperation.

We are celebrating the completion this month of the construction of the North Sea Link interconnector, which joins together our nations' world-class electricity grids for the first time. Trading over the interconnector is scheduled to start later this year.

We are also announcing that the UK and Norway are close to concluding a historic bilateral treaty on electricity interconnection, which will set out our shared principles for maximising the mutual benefits of efficient electricity trading. The treaty will also set out commitments to co-operate on electricity infrastructure between our countries, including further interconnection and infrastructure which combines cross-border transmission with offshore wind generation in the North Sea, where we have significant mutual interests.

This is an important milestone for both our countries and an achievement that will spur on the North Sea's pioneering progress in reducing carbon emissions, all while helping us to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today's commitment builds on what is already a transformative partnership between our two countries, making use of the extraordinary expertise we hold within the clean energy revolution to help fight climate change and create new business opportunities.

This includes the development of carbon capture and storage – underpinned by our bilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed in November 2018, the development of hydrogen technologies, and the opening up of our seas to unleash what is a ground-breaking new era of offshore wind power.

We have had extensive cooperation in the oil and gas sector. The UK is a key

market for Norwegian gas exports. Norway provides around one-third of UK gas supply, which has played an important role in energy decarbonisation as the UK transitions away from coal.

Looking forward, we are committed to working together on further innovative opportunities to support our economies' transition to clean, green energy as part of delivering our commitments under the Paris Agreement.