

# Forced landing of Ryanair flight FR4978 in Minsk: UK statement

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## UK-Egypt cooperation on transportation projects

25 May 2021, CAIRO – Minister of Transport Lieutenant General Kamel Al Wazir met with British Ambassador to Egypt Sir Geoffrey Adams, to discuss cooperation in current and future projects in the fields of railways, electric tractors and the underground metro.

At the beginning of the meeting, the two sides reaffirmed the depth of Egyptian-British relations and the historical cooperation linking both in the field of railways. They discussed the latest developments concerning the supply of the first two monorail trains from Alstom factories in Derby in the UK, following the acquisition of Bombardier by Alstom, following confirmation of the supply of the two trains was confirmed in September.

In addition, they examined the latest developments regarding a deal, supported by UK Export Finance, to supply 50 new tractors and develop 50 Henschel tractors, contracted between the Egyptian Railway Authority and Progress Rail of America.

The two parties also discussed the UK branch of Hitachi's interest in manufacturing and supplying 200 sleeping cars for the Egyptian Railway Authority. The Minister of Transport confirmed that the ministry has an ambitious plan to support the sleeping car fleet in efforts to improve the services provided to citizens and support the tourism sector, pointing to the importance of submitting the offer to the Simaf factory in line with the leadership directives to develop the transport sector in Egypt.

The British Ambassador also confirmed the interest of the American company Bechtel, which also has a branch in the UK, in cooperating with the Ministry of Transport on the development of the sixth line of the metro project, noting that the company would present a technical and financial offer during

the first week of next July, stressing the importance of this project.

British Ambassador to Egypt Sir Geoffrey Adams said:

His Excellency Minister of Transport Lieutenant General Kamel El Wazir and I had a fruitful and productive discussion today on UK-Egypt cooperation to support Egypt's transport sector. Through the efforts of UK companies, supported by UK Export Finance, we are helping develop a more sustainable and efficient railway and transportation system which will serve millions of Egyptians daily. These projects build on substantial UK involvement in developing the new electric monorail in Cairo, and provide job opportunities for Egyptians and British citizens alike. And importantly, they are providing green, clean transport options – vital if we are to collectively reach our climate targets as we prepare for COP26 later this year.

The Ambassador emphasized the UK companies' continued interest in the Egyptian market, and highlighted the UK's commitment to supporting Egypt's transport sector and strengthening commercial ties.

The UK has a strong history of cooperation with Egypt's transport sector already, having signed one of the biggest investment deals in Africa's infrastructure sector, to develop two electrified monorails that in the Cairo metropolitan area, which together will transport millions of people every year. The deal included a UK component worth £517m and UKEF contribution of over £1.7bn, the largest amount of financing it has ever provided for an overseas infrastructure project.

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## **Investment in Lincoln's flood defences continues at new location**

Work to strengthen riverside walls along Lincoln's Foss Bank is under way, as part of a £6 million investment in the city's flood defences.

New steel piles are being driven into the riverbank upstream of Brayford Pool, reinforcing the existing defences and maintaining the area's standard of protection.

Measures are being taken to reduce the potential impact on residents, including a 'silent piler' to significantly lessen both noise and vibration.

The work at Foss Bank is being carried out from a pontoon in the river, reducing the need for road closures and footpath diversions. A river traffic

light system is in place with staff on hand to make navigation safe for boaters.

Residential boats moored in the area will need to be temporarily moved while the work is underway. And there will be some minor disruption to parking bays on Foss Bank.

The work is expected to be completed in October, subject to water levels.

It is all part of a wider scheme that will maintain the existing standard of flood-risk protection for around 4,000 homes and businesses in Lincoln.

Led by the Environment Agency, the £6 million Lincoln Defences Project began in June 2019.

To date, it has included the refurbishment of Stamp End Sluice and defences at Sincil Dyke next to Lincoln City Football Club, Stamp End, Dixon Street and Spa Road.

Work between Dixon Street and Altham Terrace, where 500 metres of new steel piles were driven into the Witham's riverbank, was completed last month.

This reinforced the existing defences, reducing the seepage through the bank and maintaining the area's standard of protection against flooding. The embankment's footpath has been reinstated, after it was temporarily diverted during the work.

When complete, the entire Lincoln Defences project will have renovated more than 2 kilometres of riverside walls and 3 sluices, as well as introduced environmental improvements. It is expected to generate economic benefits valued at almost £33 million.

Morgan Wray, flood risk manager at the Environment Agency, said:

Lincoln's network of defensive walls and sluices work well to reduce the risk of flooding to around 4,000 properties.

Naturally, despite regular maintenance, they do need to be repaired, improved and updated from time to time.

This investment will ensure they continue to offer the same reliable standard of protection for years to come, while – at the same time – introducing measures that will enhance the environment for wildlife.

But it's important to recognise that we can never completely eliminate the risk of flooding, and would urge people to check if they're at risk, and sign up to receive free flood warnings via [GOV.UK/Flood](https://gov.uk/flood) or 0345 988 1188. These will give you invaluable notice when flooding is expected, and details of what you should do to keep safe, as well as protect your home and valuables.

The Lincoln Defences Project has been funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as part of its commitments to reduce the risk of flooding to 300,000 properties across the country between 2015 and 2021, and to 336,000 properties between 2021 and 2027.

Work on the Lincoln Defences Project has continued during the coronavirus outbreak, with strict adherence to social distancing measures.

### **The Lincoln Defences Project includes:**

- Repairs to 2 kilometres of defensive walls at various location on the River Witham.
- The introduction of coir rolls: tubes of compacted organic matter that reduce the risk of erosion and provide habitat.
- Mechanical and electrical upgrades to sluices at Great Gowt, Bargate and Stamp End.
- New and improved access to 51 kilometres of waterway for fish and eels – 17 kilometres from Brayford Pool to Torksey Look via Bargate Sluice; and 34 kilometres from Stamp End to Claypole via Stamp End Sluice.

### **About the Capital Programme**

- In 2015, the Environment Agency secured £2.6 billion of government funding to protect 300,000 homes over a 6 year period.
- In the 2020 Budget the government doubled its investment in flood and coastal scheme construction in England by committing a record £5.2 billion between 2021 and 2027. This long-term commitment will better protect 336,000 properties, including homes, businesses and critical infrastructure.

### **About the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy**

The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy was adopted in autumn 2020 and sets the blueprint for how the Environment Agency and other organisations will manage flood and coastal change from now until 2100.

The Environment Agency is the leading organisation for protecting and improving the environment in England. It is responsible for making sure that air, land and water are looked after by today's society, so that tomorrow's generations inherit a cleaner, healthier world. Its five-year plan for reaching a cleaner, greener and healthier future is available on GOV.UK.

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## **[Lesotho: call for bids for COVID-19](#)**

# community fund

World news story

The British High Commission Maseru is inviting NGOs in Lesotho and established community-based organisations to bid for COVID-19 community engagement projects.



# UK Government

The British High Commission Maseru is inviting NGOs working with communities in Lesotho and established community-based organisations to bid for small grant funding of up to M100,000 for COVID-19 community engagement projects.

The bidding process is competitive. Only the strongest bids will be selected. Selected projects will be informed by 1 July 2021 and implementing organisations will be required to attend a preparatory seminar. All activity must be completed by 31 December 2021. Funding will be paid on completion of activities and project reports.

## **Objectives**

The projects should meet the following objective:

Contribute to the reduced spread of coronavirus in a particular area or amongst a target population in Lesotho through improved engagement, understanding and community action including concerning preventative measures

and vaccination.

## Selection criteria

Bids will be judged on:

- potential impact (including the scope of the project and the likelihood of achieving that impact)
- evidence that the bidding organisation has strong links with the target communities
- value for money
- sustainability including the potential for the project to be scaled up or replicated elsewhere
- the capacity of the bidding organisation including a track record of previous successful projects and proper presentation of project objectives and budget

A project bidding form can be obtained by emailing [BHC.maseru@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:BHC.maseru@fcdo.gov.uk). Project forms must be returned to the British High Commission by 11 June 2020.

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## [UK condemns the detention of Malian government figures: Minister Duddridge statement](#)

Press release

UK Minister for Africa, James Duddridge condemns detentions and calls for immediate release.



## **UK Minister for Africa, James Duddridge said:**

Along with the United Nations, ECOWAS, African Union and other partners, the UK condemns the detention of the President, Prime Minister and other members of the government in Mali. We call for the immediate, safe and unconditional release of all those detained.

The UK supports the transition process to democratic, constitutional rule in Mali and it is deeply concerning that recent events risk undermining efforts to restore this rule within the agreed timeframe. All parties should engage constructively with the ECOWAS delegation which arrives in country today.

The transition process must resume so that the government can deliver on its commitments, established through an inclusive dialogue, and respond to the needs of the Malian people. Those who stand in the way of this process must be held to account.

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