

UN Security Council signals support for Libyan interim Government of National Unity

News story

The UNSC adopted a resolution in support of the interim Government of National Unity, underscoring the need for December elections and a full implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement.



Minister for the Middle East and North Africa James Cleverly said:

The UN Security Council's adoption of this UK-drafted resolution sends a clear signal of support for the interim Government of National Unity and reinforces the need for them to facilitate elections on 24 December.

It also makes clear the need for all foreign forces and mercenaries to withdraw without delay in line with the Ceasefire Agreement.

We now expect all UN members to act on that, helping Libya to regain its sovereignty and work towards lasting peace and stability. The UK will continue to support Libya on that journey.

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Review into the Development and Use of

Supply Chain Finance in Government – Terms of Reference

PURPOSE

1.A Review into the Development and Use of Supply Chain Finance (and associated schemes) related to Greensill Capital in Government, led by Nigel Boardman, has been announced by the Government.

2.The Prime Minister has asked Mr Boardman to investigate the development and use of supply chain finance in government, especially the role of Lex Greensill and Greensill Capital (including associated companies or companies in its group) and any related issues that Mr Boardman considers are in scope.

3.Mr Boardman will have access to all necessary government information required to conduct the review and will engage with those involved at the time decisions were made.

4.Mr Boardman will report his findings and any recommendations to the Prime Minister no later than the end of June 2021. He will step aside from his work as a non-executive Director of BEIS while the review is carried out.

SCOPE

5.The Review will consider the development and use of Supply Chain Finance (and associated schemes) in HM Government, especially the role of Mr Greensill and Greensill Capital (including associated companies or companies in its group), in the following areas:

a. Mr Greensill's engagement, activities and terms of engagement with the Government; b. The development and use of Supply Chain Finance (and associated schemes) in HM Government (and its ALBs), including, where relevant, contracting arrangements for these schemes, with a particular focus on where Greensill Capital (including associated companies or companies in its group) has been engaged; c.The relationship between current and former Ministers and officials and Greensill Capital (including associated companies or companies in its group), including processes for consideration and management of conflicts of interest during and following Crown Service; d.Engagement with HM Government by those acting for and on behalf of Greensill Capital (including associated companies or companies in its group); e.Investigation of any further matters that arise as a result of examination of the events set out above, which Mr Boardman considers are in scope; and f. Additional areas can also be added into the review by the Government with the agreement of Mr Boardman.

6.The Review clearly has dependencies with wider policy work underway in government; for example on the post-legislative scrutiny of Part 1 of the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014, work to update the business appointment rules, the

Procurement Green Paper plans or implementation of recommendations from other reports into Procurement activity in HMG. While the focus of the review will not be to duplicate this policy work, Mr Boardman may wish to draw matters to attention to consider in that work.

7.The Review will look at how far the relevant systems and policies were upheld at the time decisions were made. If matters arise which relate to misconduct, these can be referred to the appropriate process under the relevant Code or through Civil Service HR processes.

APPROACH AND PROCESS

8.The Review will be conducted in two stages:

Stage 1 – a report into the facts established in relation to the points set out at paragraph 5. Stage 2 – a report on findings and any recommendations in light of the facts identified.

9.The review will be conducted through assessing all relevant documentation and interviewing relevant individuals. Mr Boardman will have access to all necessary government information required to conduct the review and will engage with those involved at the time decisions were made.

10.This is a non-statutory review, but in line with long-standing convention, the Prime Minister expects all Ministers, special advisers and civil servants whether current or former to cooperate fully with this review.

OUTPUT

11.The review will produce a report to the Prime Minister which will be published and presented to Parliament.

TIMINGS

12.The review will report to the Prime Minister by 30 June 2021. The Government will publish and present to Parliament the Review's findings and the Government's response in due course thereafter.

JCVI issues new advice on COVID-19 vaccination for pregnant women

There have been no specific safety concerns identified with any brand of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines in relation to pregnancy.

[Real-world data from the United States](#) shows that around 90,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated, mainly with mRNA vaccines including Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, without any safety concerns being raised.

Based on this data, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advises that it's preferable for pregnant women in the UK to be offered the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines where available. There is no evidence to suggest that other vaccines are unsafe for pregnant women, but more research is needed.

The advice, published in Public Health England's [Green Book](#), a clinical professional guide for vaccinators in the UK, still advises that pregnant women should discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with their clinician, including the latest evidence on safety and which vaccines they should receive.

Professor Wei Shen Lim, COVID-19 Chair for JCVI, said:

We encourage pregnant women to discuss the risks and benefits with their clinician – those at increased risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 are encouraged to promptly take up the offer of vaccination when offered.

There have been no specific safety concerns from any brand of COVID-19 vaccines in relation to pregnancy.

There is more real-world safety data from the US in relation to the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines in women who are pregnant – therefore, we advise a preference for these to be offered to pregnant women.

All vaccines being used in the UK have undergone robust clinical trials and have met the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)'s strict standards of safety, effectiveness and quality.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at Public Health England (PHE), said:

The available data on the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines provides confidence that they can be offered safely to pregnant women.

The COVID-19 vaccines continue to save thousands of lives and it is important that we encourage as many people as possible to take up the offer when it is their turn.

Dr Edward Morris, President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG), said:

We are grateful to the JCVI for taking into consideration our evidence and updating the guidance around the COVID-19 vaccine in pregnancy.

Vaccination offers pregnant women the best protection from

COVID-19, which can be serious in some women.

We believe it should be a woman's choice whether to have the vaccine or not after considering the benefits and risks and would encourage pregnant women to discuss with a trusted source like their GP, obstetrician or midwife, or a healthcare professional in a vaccination centre.

This move will empower all the pregnant women in the UK to make the decision that is right for them, at the same time that the non-pregnant population in their age group receive protection from COVID-19.

Data shows that vaccines are effective in protecting people from serious illness from COVID-19. Though uncommon, severe illness due to COVID-19 is more likely in later pregnancy. Pregnant women who do get symptomatic COVID-19 infection are 2 to 3 times more likely to give birth to their baby prematurely.

The greatest risk factor for severe outcomes from COVID-19 is age, which is why pregnant women should be invited for vaccination along with their age or clinical risk group.

Women who are planning pregnancy, are in the immediate postpartum, or are breastfeeding can be vaccinated with any vaccine, depending on their age and clinical risk group.

The JCVI will continue to closely monitor the evidence on COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy and will update its advice as required.

The COVID-19 vaccination programme has been a huge success, with recent PHE analysis showing the vaccines have prevented 10,400 deaths in those aged 60 and older in England up to the end of March.

The JCVI advised last week that, as a precaution, it is preferable for people under the age of 30 with no underlying health conditions to be offered an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine where possible.

[Sentencing of pro-democracy figures in Hong Kong: FCD0 statement](#)

News story

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office comments on the sentencing of Jimmy Lai and other pro-democracy figures in Hong Kong.



Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:

The Hong Kong authorities' decision to target leading pro-democracy figures for prosecution is unacceptable and must stop.

The right to peaceful protest is fundamental to Hong Kong's way of life – protected in both the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law – and it should be upheld.

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[Condemnation of the April 14 attacks in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region: joint statement](#)

News story

The governments of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have condemned the April 14 attack in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.



We, the governments of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America condemn in the strongest terms the April 14 attacks in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. Together, our governments will support the Government of Iraq's investigation into the attacks to ensure that those responsible will be held accountable.

We are united in our view that attacks on U.S. and Coalition personnel and facilities will not be tolerated and reiterate our steadfast commitment to the fight against ISIS.

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