

British Embassy Montevideo “Leader for a Day” competition

World news story

The Embassy celebrated International Women’s Day promoting women empowerment.



UK Government

To celebrate International Women’s Day on 8 March, the British Embassy Montevideo held a “Leader for a Day” competition, in order to encourage and promote the participation of women in leadership positions. More than 70 female students applied to shadow eight leading women from a range of sectors.

The winners were:

- Agustina Carrasco, paired with Beatriz Argimón, Vice President of the Republic
- Victoria Calcaterra, paired with Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo
- Delfina Bisio, paired with Mariana Chilibroste, Co-founder of Sellin

- Martina Rebellato, paired with Silvia Emaldi, Engineer and President of UTE, Uruguay's state owned power company
- Paula Herou, paired with Pilar Moreno, Associate Professor of the Faculty of Sciences, UdelaR and researcher at the Institut Pasteur de Montevideo
- Pilar Amaya, paired with Faye O'Connor, British Ambassador
- Romina Violante, paired with Blanca Rodríguez, Journalist
- Catalina Rodríguez, paired with Alejandra Silveira, Astrazeneca International Logistics Manager, Uruguay Hub

The day began with a breakfast at the British Residence, where the participants discussed what International Women's Day represents, shared their personal experiences and spoke about the importance of opportunities such as "Leader for a Day" to help women learn from each other and understand how to succeed in breaking the glass ceiling and reaching positions of importance in society.

For the rest of the day, each participant had the opportunity to accompany their matched leader in her activities, allowing them to see work day first-hand, as giving them opportunities to expand their network.

The video below captures the activities of Ambassador Faye O'Connor and her companion, Pilar Amaya, during the day.

[#LíderPorUnDía: Día Internacional de la Mujer](#)

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[Urging the Government of DRC to spearhead efforts towards lasting peace](#)

Madam President, let me begin by congratulating SRSK Keita on her appointment, and by thanking her and Ms Lusumba for their briefings today. As ever, I would like to commend the continuation of MONUSCO's vital operations despite challenges in the operating environment.

Madam President, I would like to focus my intervention today on three points. First, despite numerous multifaceted challenges, it is important to recognise the progress that is being made in DRC. To that end, I would like to congratulate President Tshisekedi on the establishment of his “Union Sacrée” coalition, and to welcome his efforts towards forming a new government.

It is crucial that the Government of the DRC drives forward urgent reforms – particularly those that will ensure free and fair elections in 2023, improve the economy for all, and establish peace and security in the East. As Ms Lusumba’s briefing made clear, gender sensitive approaches in all of these areas are critical. In this regard, I commend the President’s commitment to thirty percent female representation in his new government.

Secondly, despite progress in some areas, I must stress again our concern about increased armed group violence in eastern DRC. The number of attacks against civilians so far this year – in Ituri, North and South Kivu particularly – is a pressing and tragic reminder of the need for renewed focus on tackling the threat posed by armed groups.

In this vein, I call on all national, regional and international actors to utilise the levers at their disposal to stop these groups from accessing weapons, from being able to trade and make money, and from receiving political protection while committing atrocities with impunity. I would also like to express my deep concern at DRC’s acute humanitarian situation, which is driven in large part by conflict.

Finally, Madam President, a word on MONUSCO’s transition. I welcome positive momentum at the provincial level towards the Mission’s withdrawal from the Kasais. However, transition can only be sustainable and responsible if the government is engaged fully with the process.

To that end, I urge the Government of the DRC to engage and coordinate at the provincial and national levels. Efforts to address the root causes of conflict in DRC and to build a safer, more prosperous future for its citizens will only succeed if spearheaded by the Government.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Sobriety tags launched in England to tackle alcohol-fuelled crime](#)

- Sobriety tags detecting whether offenders have broken drinking bans will be rolled out across England as part of a crackdown on alcohol-fuelled crime
- Successful launch in Wales showed that offenders stayed sober for more than 95% of days monitored

- Alcohol is one of the driving influences of domestic violence and unprovoked attacks on strangers

Offenders who commit alcohol-driven crimes could be ordered to wear a tag which takes a sample of their sweat every 30 minutes and alerts the probation service if alcohol is detected. They face further court sentences or fines if caught breaching a ban.

More than 100 offenders have been tagged since the scheme launched in Wales in October and it has proven effective, with offenders staying sober on over 95% of days monitored. Offenders have credited the scheme with helping them improve their lifestyle and staff say the tags have helped the offenders stay away from crime.

Alcohol plays a part in 39% of violent crime, with the social and economic cost of drink-related harm around £21.5 billion per year and is seen as one of the drivers of domestic violence and unprovoked attacks. That is why the sobriety tags will be backed up by targeted professional support, signposting offenders to the help they need and helping to prevent future victims.

Minister for Crime and Policing, Kit Malthouse MP said:

These tags have already brought enormous benefit to Wales since they were introduced in October, with one offender I met saying it not only changed his ways but also saved his life.

This smart and powerful new tool is helping the fight against alcohol-fuelled violence which ruins too many lives and families and creates mayhem in our town centres.

The tags have helped probation officers in Wales steer offenders away from bad habits and get them the support they need to turn their backs on crime.

Probation officer Laura Harrison said:

Sobriety tags have had an enormously positive effect on the people I've supervised in Wales, improving their mental health, keeping them off drink and out of trouble with the police.

One man with a history of drink-related violence was given a tag for 90 days and has been sober ever since and says the scheme helped him turn his life around.

The tags can distinguish the difference between drinks and other types of alcohol – such as hand sanitiser or perfume. They work 24/7 and can also tell

if someone tries to block contact between the tag and their skin.

It is the latest boost to the Government's plans to make more effective use of tagging to help reduce crime following the launch of [GPS tags being used to crack down on burglars and thieves](#) earlier this month.

The Government is addressing the root causes of crime, tackling factors such as addiction, homelessness and mental health, and recently announced an extra £148m package to target drugs-related crime with the biggest boost in drug treatment spending in 15 years.

Supervision of offenders in the community is also being improved with greater powers for probation officers, novel uses of GPS tags and longer and more flexible curfews. For example, by having lesser restrictions Monday to Friday to keep offenders in work, but stricter curfews of up to 20 hours a day on weekends.

[**New freedoms to support high streets and fast track delivery of schools and hospitals across England introduced today**](#)

- New planning law enables unused commercial buildings to be changed into homes
- Will provide much-needed new homes across England and attract footfall to high streets
- New planning rules allowing for the speedy extension, of valued public buildings including schools, colleges, universities and hospitals
- Part of a wider package of government measures introduced to help high streets and town centres recover after lockdown and create the most small business friendly planning regime in the world.
- Support the hundreds of jobs that depend on housing and construction

New rules allowing commercial premises to be converted into homes come into force today, as part of a package of measures to revitalise England's cherished high streets and town centres (31 March 2021).

The new rules, announced by Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick, will help support the creation of much-needed homes while also giving high streets a new lease of life – removing eyesores, transforming unused buildings and making the most of brownfield land.

Today's package also introduces a new fast track for extending public service

buildings. New rules allow for bigger extensions to existing public buildings including schools, colleges, universities and hospitals.

This will help deliver more classrooms and hospital space by enabling them to extend further and faster, as we emerge from the pandemic.

Allowing unused commercial buildings to be changed into homes will encourage more people to live near local high streets and come to the area for work and leisure, helping cement our high streets and town centres in their rightful place at the heart of communities.

The new homes will be delivered through a simpler 'prior approval' process instead of a full planning application and will be subject to high standards, ensuring they provide adequate natural light and meet space standards.

Currently, public buildings can have small extensions without the need for a full planning application. Today's changes mean they would be able to extend further and faster, helping to quickly deliver more classrooms and hospital space.

This will mean that vital public buildings will be expanded more quickly through the planning system with a faster, more streamlined planning process.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We are creating the most small business friendly planning system in the world to provide the flexibility needed for high streets to bounce back from the pandemic.

By diversifying our town and city centres and encouraging the conversion of unused shops into cafes, restaurants or even new homes, we can help the high street to adapt and thrive for the future.

The public also want improvements to public services as quickly as possible and so these changes will also help schools and hospitals to adapt quickly to changing needs with a new fast track for extending public service buildings. This will help deliver more classrooms and hospital space by helping them extend further and faster.

This announcement supports a series of recent measures introduced to help high streets recover once lockdown restrictions are lifted which include:

- £56 million Welcome Back Fund to help boost the look and feel of high streets and seaside towns
- Relaxation of planning rules to allow pubs and restaurants to operate as takeaways.
- Planning freedoms to allow outdoor markets, marquees, pop-up summer fairs without the need of a planning application.
- Longer opening hours for retail to give shoppers more flexibility and

ease transport pressures

- Extension of provisions for temporary pavement licences to facilitate alfresco dining

Measures announced today also include:

- Amendment of existing permitted development rights for ports so that they have the same freedoms as airports for undertaking development
- Amendments to the demolition permitted development right to ensure the removal of unlisted heritage assets is subject to due process and proper consultation via planning

Further information

The government is now introducing legislation for England to bring forward this right from 1 August 2021. The right will allow for local consideration by the local planning authority of specific planning matters through the prior approval process. These considerations include:

- Flooding
- Impacts of noise from commercial premises
- Provision of adequate natural light to all habitable rooms
- In conservation areas only – consideration of the impact of the loss of the ground floor Commercial, Business and Service use
- Impact of the loss of health centres and registered nurseries on the provision of such local services

The right also includes a vacancy requirement that will ensure the building changing use has been vacant for 3 months before the date of the application to protect successful businesses in these premises. A size limit will also be included of 1,500 square metres of floorspace being able to change use under the right to focus the right on medium sized high street sites which are more likely to be suitable for conversion.

To prevent gaming, the building must have been in Commercial Business and Service use for two years before benefiting from the right. The right will apply in Conservation Areas, but not in other protected land listed in Article 2(3) of the GPDO (General Permitted Development (Order)) which includes national parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

Where there is an existing Article 4 direction on 31 July 2021 in respect of the change of use from offices to residential (under Class O) it will continue to have effect on equivalent development in respect of offices (now within the Commercial Business and Service use class) until 31 July 2022.

Details on amendment of existing permitted development rights for ports

The government response to the [Freeports consultation](#) (October 2020) and the [Freeports bidding prospectus](#) (November 2020) committed the government to amending the existing permitted development right for ports by April 2021,

with the intention of aligning this right with the similar right for airports.

We have therefore amended the right to allow ports, and for the first time their agents, to erect buildings “in connection” with the operation of the port, for example to support logistics or facilities for arriving passengers. The right now:

- Specifically allows for development in connection with the provision of services and facilities at the port, including the erection or alteration of an operational building.
- Widen the scope of who can undertake development to include a port’s “agent of development”.
- As we are increasing flexibility by broadening the scope of what can be built, and to ensure that parity is achieved with airports, a requirement to consult the local planning authority will be introduced. As for airports, it includes an exemption for development below 4m and under 200 cubic metres capacity, or where it is urgently required for the running of the port.

Details on public service infrastructure PDR (permitted development right)

To support the faster delivery of important public service infrastructure we have amended an existing permitted development right to allow larger extensions to certain infrastructure.

This amended permitted development right will allow for the extension, erection or alteration of school, college, university, hospital, and for the first time prison buildings by up to 25% of the existing footprint of the cumulative buildings on the site, or 250 square metres, whichever is greater. The existing height restriction on new buildings is also being increased from 5 metres to 6 metres.

Protect unlisted statues, memorials and monuments

Background

As announced in a written ministerial statement to Parliament on 18 January, we have introduced new measures to make the removal of unlisted statues, memorials and monuments subject to a requirement to obtain planning permission. To implement this, we have made changes to permitted development right regulations to ensure the demolition of unlisted statues, memorials and monuments is subject to planning decisions.

In determining applications to remove historic statues, local planning authorities will need to have regard to the government’s policy that these should be retained and explained rather than removed.

The government is committed to ensuring that historic statues, memorials and monuments (both listed and unlisted) are appropriately protected and that

they are not removed without proper consideration and public consultation.

- The government believes that historic statues, memorials and monuments should be retained and explained to help educate people about all aspects of our country's complex past.
- Listed statues, memorials and monuments are already protected through the listed building consent regime. But we also need to protect those unlisted statues which are important to local communities.
- To achieve this, we are amending permitted development rights to ensure that, in future, any proposals to demolish unlisted statues, memorials and monuments require an application for planning permission.

Global summit to help those most vulnerable fight climate change

- COP26 President and Foreign Secretary to co-chair international Climate & Development Ministerial event
- Event will look at how developed countries can better support states most vulnerable to climate change ahead of the G7 and COP26
- New funding announced to help low-carbon investment in developing countries

Countries that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change will help set the international agenda in the run up to COP26 at an event hosted by the UK today.

The Climate and Development Ministerial will bring together countries and partners to work on solutions to the flooding, drought and extreme temperatures faced by many developing countries, as well as opportunities for energy access, cleaner air and smarter cities.

The event co-chaired by the COP26 President, Alok Sharma and the Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, will be convened virtually. The UK's International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for COP26 Anne-Marie Trevelyan, will also take part alongside representatives from youth groups, indigenous peoples and financial institutions.

This is a key moment on the road to COP26 in Glasgow later this year and aims to build consensus on practical actions and solutions across four key areas:

1. Responding to Climate Impacts: better coordination and international cooperation to address losses and damages related to climate change
2. Fiscal Space and Debt Relief: alleviating fiscal pressure in developing countries so that they are more able to address climate change

3. Access to Finance: improving climate vulnerable countries' and communities' access to finance to decarbonise their economies and adapt to climate change
4. Better Finance: addressing the challenge of how to improve the quantity, quality and composition of climate finance, in particular to mobilise funds for adaptation and resilience and support the most vulnerable

Ahead of the event, the UK Government is announcing £500,000 of funding for the new Initiative for Voluntary Carbon Market Integrity. High-quality voluntary carbon markets could increase finance flows to where it is most needed, helping to create greener, more inclusive and resilient economies around the world.

Also taking place today is the IEA-COP26 Net Zero summit. Decision makers from more than 40 countries will come together to focus on the need for international collaboration to accelerate a clean energy transition ahead of COP26. This is being co-hosted by the IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol and COP26 President Alok Sharma.

In his speech later today, COP26 President Alok Sharma is expected to say:

“This is one of the most important events we are hosting in the run up to COP26. We must acknowledge that the people who have done the least to cause the climate crisis are suffering the most.

“That is a searing injustice. And so developed countries have a particular responsibility to support the response of communities, which are most vulnerable to climate change.

“It is absolutely vital that we find solutions because we are running out of time to keep the crucial 1.5 degree target within reach.”

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is expected to say:

“Today is all about hearing from those countries that are most vulnerable to climate change – those on the front line of this fight.

“We need to consider where international systems can do more to deliver urgent climate action.

“We know that lack of finance creates barriers to countries implementing the Paris Agreement. Combined with the challenge of recovering from the pandemic, this threatens to set back progress.

“The UK is responding. We have committed £11.6 billion over the next five years in climate finance.

“The way forward must be to engineer a green recovery that delivers for people and planet.”

Ends .