

# Ensuring a responsible and sustainable transition to UNITAMS

Thank you, Mr President, and to USGs DiCarlo, Lacroix and Khare for their briefing.

I would like to start by commending the civilian-led government of Sudan's commitment to continuing to make welcome progress towards their goal of becoming a fully democratic state.

Prime Minister Hamdok and his government have implemented a number of critical reforms. Of particular note is the removal of fuel subsidies and progress towards the ratification of key international human rights norms. We urge the Government of Sudan to continue on this path by implementing all necessary economic reforms and ensuring full respect for fundamental human rights.

The United Kingdom also applauds the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement on the 3rd of October. This agreement is a clear demonstration of the priorities of the new Sudan. We urge all stakeholders to support this promise of peace through the swift and full implementation of the agreement. We take note of the requests in the agreement for United Nations' support and call for further engagement between the government and the United Nations in this regard.

Mr President, whilst significant steps have been taken to overcome a multitude of challenges, as we've heard, much more remains to be done. Exacerbated by COVID-19, the economic situation has continued to deteriorate. Humanitarian needs are increasing, and violence has spiked in conflict areas.

Regarding the socio-economic situation, the United Kingdom welcomes the World Bank and IMF support for government efforts to alleviate the dire economic situation. The World Bank's support of the Sudan Family Support Programme will help mitigate the negative impact of some of the economic reforms. As the largest bilateral donor to the programme, we are playing our part with a pledge of \$105 million.

Mr President, turning to the security situation, the United Kingdom welcomes the government's commitment to fulfilling the protection of civilian responsibilities and to ensuring unfettered humanitarian access. However, we cannot ignore the significant security challenges that remain. Persistent intercommunal violence, as well as intermittent clashes between the Sudan Liberation Army, Abdul Wahid and government forces are continuing. We echo the Secretary-General's call for the Government of Sudan to expedite its preparations to protect civilians in line with their National Protection of Civilians Strategy.

As the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) prepares to withdraw, we urge the government to develop more responsive and

representative rule of law institutions in order to build trust with local populations and ensure stability in conflict areas.

Mr President, United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) was established to support Sudan's transition. The delays in appointing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to lead UNITAMS are preventing the provision of such support. We urge the Secretariat to conclude the appointment process and continue to work with the Government of Sudan to expedite the full establishment of UNITAMS throughout Sudan.

I commend the continued support that UNAMID is providing to the Government of Sudan, particularly in the areas of peacebuilding and capacity-building.

We call on the United Nations, working with the Government of Sudan and the country team, to ensure that the transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS is responsible, sequenced and sustainable. In this regard, let me reiterate the Council's expectation that UNITAMS and its Integrated Country Team be the primary beneficiaries of UNAMID assets.

Mr President, I would like to briefly comment on the impact of the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia on Sudan. We commend Sudan's commitment to enabling humanitarian access to refugees fleeing the violence in Tigray. Funding from the United Kingdom is already helping new refugees from Ethiopia to receive emergency assistance. However, more is needed. We encourage member states to support the United Nations in assisting Sudan to respond to these increased needs.

Finally, as this is the last session on Sudan before their Council tenure ends, let me express our thanks to Germany for the excellent co-penholdership over the past two years. Your commitment to peace and stability is unwavering, and we look forward to continuing our close partnership in support of Sudan.

Thank you.

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**[British Embassy Call for bids –  
Climate Change seminar – Deadline  
extended](#)**



# UK Government

The British Embassy in San Jose invites applications for proposals from interested organisations to help design and deliver a virtual seminar (in Spanish and English) on best practice in climate change adaptation, delivered over two half days.

The seminar would demonstrate how investing in adaptation and biodiversity can prevent climate change impacts, allow faster recovery from natural shocks, and be of economic benefit. This could include, for example, discussion panels on the following topics:

- evidence-based analysis of the cost/benefits of preserving biodiversity
- the socio-economic benefits of adaptation programmes, particularly in terms of job and livelihood generation
- the role of nature and nature-based solutions in planning for a Green Recovery
- best practice in integrating environmental protection into policy making

Further details of the UK's climate change ambition and priorities can be found at [www.ukcop26.org](http://www.ukcop26.org)

The selected implementer will assist in the selection of speakers, identifying and inviting relevant stakeholders and audiences and lead on all logistical aspects of the seminar's organisation and execution. Seminar must take place by 31 March 2021. A more detailed concept note will be provided by this Embassy to the successful candidate. The Embassy will support the organisation of the event with inputs and contacts.

## **Bid guidance**

- Proposal budgets should be in USD.
- Maximum budget limit is USD \$20,000.
- Activity must be completed by 31 March 2021.
- Project proposals must have a clear purpose supported by achievable and measurable outputs (e.g. activities and reports) and outcomes (i.e. what the project aims to help address through its activity).
- Projects are funded under a reimbursement scheme, against delivery of milestones, with no expectations of continued funding beyond this period.
- Project proposals should demonstrate that the staffing level is appropriate to the aim of the project and that the staff have relevant expertise and experience in the field.
- Deadline for receipt of proposal is 6 January 2021.

## **Assessment**

Bids will be assessed by the British Embassy Projects Board against the following criteria:

- alignment with the above-mentioned objectives and outcomes.
- outcomes are achievable within the funding period.
- project design includes clear monitoring and evaluation procedures, as well as risk and financial accountability procedures.
- the organisation's safeguarding policies ensure protection of beneficiaries.
- administration costs for delivering a project should not exceed 10% of the total project budget.
- overall value for money.

## **Bidding Process**

1. Project proposals must be received in English by midnight (Costa Rica time) on 6 January 2021. Late proposals will not be considered.
2. Proposals must be submitted in English using only the forms provided, in their original formats (no pdfs please).
3. Proposals must contain the name of the call for bids, followed by the name of the organisation submitting the proposal, e.g. "Calls for bids: Climate Change seminar – [Name of organisation]"
4. Proposals must be submitted in English to Denise.Lewis@fcdo.gov.uk and Ivonne.Lopez@fcdo.gov.uk
5. Only the project proposal selected for further consideration will be notified.

All implementers will be expected to sign a standard FCO contract or grant agreement with the Embassy. The terms of the contract or agreement are not negotiable.

## Bid documents

1. [Project Bid form](#) (ODT, 52.9KB)
2. [Activity Based Budget \(ABB\) template](#) (ODS, 10.3KB)

## Other important information

1. [Value for money and ABB guidance](#) (ODT, 13.7KB)
2. [Administrative costs guidance](#) (ODT, 8.52KB)
3. [Grant Agreement](#) (ODT, 84.8KB)

Published 8 December 2020

Last updated 18 December 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 18 December 2020

Deadline for proposals extended to 6 January 2021.

2. 8 December 2020

First published.

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## [Taxation \(Post-Transition Period\) Bill introduced today](#)

News story

The government has today (8 December 2020) introduced the Taxation (Post-Transition Period) Bill. This implements key aspects of the Northern Ireland Protocol in UK legislation, providing legal clarity for how customs, VAT, and excise duty will be dealt with after the end of the transition period.



- Bill introduced giving practical effect to various aspects of the Northern Ireland Protocol

- the Bill will allow us to put in place decisions by the Joint Committee on goods 'not at risk' of entering the EU, ensuring they do not have to pay the EU tariff
- a significant element in ensuring we live up to our commitments to uphold the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement

Financial Secretary to the Treasury Jesse Norman said:

This Bill delivers on the government's commitment to upholding the Good Friday Agreement, ensuring trade can continue in line with the agreement reached in the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The Northern Ireland Protocol requires that the UK introduces a framework for charges for customs, VAT and excise after the end of the transition period on 31 December.

The Taxation Bill creates the legal framework for those charges, aiming to minimise the practical changes for traders to ensure the efficient flow of goods within the United Kingdom, and on the island of Ireland.

Customs charges will only apply to goods arriving in Northern Ireland – from both Great Britain and countries outside of the EU – if they are 'at risk' of moving into the EU. The Joint Committee will set out more information in coming days.

The Bill will also ensure that EU goods imported into Northern Ireland from Ireland are not subject to customs duties or processes. It will also ensure the UK's customs regime applies for goods moving from Northern Ireland to Great Britain if those goods do not qualify for unfettered access.

This Bill also sets out the VAT and excise duty rules that will apply between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The EU-UK Joint statement made today sets out the agreement in principle regarding the implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol. The Government is therefore not introducing the so-called notwithstanding provision into the Taxation Bill.

### **Further information**

See [Taxation \(Post-Transition Period\) Bill](#)

Published 8 December 2020

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# Landmark extension for one of Britain's most important sites for water birds

Natural England has today [9 December] confirmed that one of the most important sites in Britain for water birds – the Ribble Estuary National Nature Reserve (NNR) in Lancashire – has been extended by nearly a fifth.

The additional areas of internationally important saltmarsh and newly created wetland habitats now added to the NNR, bolstering the nature reserve's impressive stature as the third largest in England at 5,231 hectares.

The NNR is one of Britain's most important sites for water birds, with many rare and threatened species breeding or wintering there each year. Over a quarter of a million migrating water birds gather on the marshes each winter, including the iconic sight and sound of tens of thousands of pink-footed geese that migrate to the estuary from Greenland and Iceland during the autumn. The Ribble Estuary is also an important site for declining birds including lapwings, ringed plovers, sanderling, and redshanks, as well as being one of the UK's strongholds for water voles.

Today's declaration is a result of a partnership of many landowners and stakeholders across the estuary – including Natural England, The RSPB, and LDWA – who have collaborated to secure greater protection and management for the Ribble Estuary's rich habitats.

Announcing the new extension, Natural England Chair Tony Juniper, said:

The National Nature Reserves are the very jewels in the crown of our wonderful natural environment and Natural England is very proud to declare this very significant extension to what is already one of our largest of such reserves. The Ribble Estuary is one of the UK's most important areas for water birds and this extension will mean that the habitat here will be bigger, better, and more joined-up, making for a more secure future for the iconic wildlife that relies on this internationally-important place, including the quarter of a million migrating water birds who visit and feed here.

For far too long the natural world upon which we all depend has been in decline, and today marks another important step toward the establishment for England's Nature Recovery Network, enabling the restoration of Nature at scale across the length and breadth of the country, in the process bringing a wide range of practical benefits, including for everyone to enjoy.

Jim Wardill, RSPB Operations Director for Northern England, said:

The fantastic news of a bigger, better and more joined up National Nature Reserve, is real testament to both the national importance of the estuary's birdlife, and the power of collaborations. We're excited about what this large scale nature reserve means for both the wildlife that can thrive there, and the local communities who will be able connect to nature and learn about the importance of conservation through the RSPB's newly refurbished Ribble Discovery Centre from next spring.

Andrew Cash, Chairman of Lytham and District Wildfowlers Association (LDWA), said:

LDWA are proud to have been custodians for more than 35 years of 200 plus hectares on the north bank of the Estuary, the last 25 of these within the Ribble Estuary National Nature Reserve. Working in close conjunction with Natural England and its predecessors, the area has become increasingly a haven for breeding and overwintering birds, and other fauna and flora, and a nationally recognised model of good saltmarsh management and conservation.

LDWA are pleased, as part of the extension of the Nature Reserve announced today, to have dedicated a further 100 plus hectares of its land, to ensure the future protection and improvement of the Association's landholdings under the agreed management regime for the enlarged area.

## **Additional information**

- The existing NNR will be expanded to include the RSPB Marshside and RSPB Hesketh Out Marsh nature reserves, as well as additional land managed by the Lytham and District Wildfowlers Association (LDWA) at Warton Marsh. Natural England will continue to manage the substantial part of the existing NNR.
  - The Ribble Estuary National Nature Reserve was first declared in 1981 (as Ribble Marshes NNR), originally over an area of 2302 hectares, and has since been extended on three occasions. The previous extent of the NNR covered an area of 4365 hectares, which has now extended to 5231ha. The estuary is also designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a European Special Protection Area (SPA), and international Ramsar site.
  - All in all the Ribble caters for 12 species at numbers of International importance (i.e. it has more than 1% of their entire population) and an additional 13 species at levels of national importance (i.e. it is home to more than 1% of their UK population).
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# Upholding the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea

Mr President,

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea – UNCLOS – is a critical part of the rules-based international system. Its provisions apply to 70% of the surface of the globe and form an essential component of global governance.

The United Kingdom is fully committed to upholding its rules and securing the implementation of its rights and obligations. This commitment is a common endeavour of the international community.

In this context, the UK would like to reaffirm its commitment to the ongoing Biodiversity in areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) process, and express our thanks to Ambassador Rena Lee of Singapore, the Secretariat of the BBNJ process and to all delegations for their efforts to maintain the discussions on this issue despite the impacts of COVID 19.

Mr President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of this year's Omnibus Resolution on the Oceans and Law of the Sea and we would like to thank the co-ordinator Natalie Morris-Sharma for her hard work. We welcome the fact that the Resolution reaffirms the universal and unified character of UNCLOS, reaffirms also that UNCLOS sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, and underscores that the integrity of the Convention needs to be maintained.

The United Kingdom also welcomes the publication of the Second World Ocean Assessment. This is an important contribution to our scientific understanding of the ocean. It is particularly timely as we look forward to the launch of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development in 2021. We would like to thank the Group of Experts and the Co-Chairs for the Ad Hoc Working Group for all their work.

The UK regrets that Argentina insisted on importing a political disagreement into the text of a scientific report, despite a clear disclaimer at the beginning of the report that it is without prejudice to such issues.

Mr President,

UNCLOS sets out the legal framework for maritime claims and the rules of freedom of navigation. It also sets out obligations for bilateral, regional and international co-operation, including for the conservation and management of living resources, for the protection and preservation of the marine environment, and for the peaceful settlement of disputes. This legal framework applies in the South China Sea as it also applies across the rest of the world's ocean and seas, and offers a valuable means for dispute resolution.

In that context, the UK would like to underline the importance of unhampered exercise of the freedoms of the high seas, in particular the freedom of navigation and overflight, and of the right of innocent passage enshrined in UNCLOS.

The UK is also clear that UNCLOS sets the specific and exhaustive conditions for the application of straight and archipelagic baselines, which are defined in Part II and Part IV. Therefore there is no legal ground for continental States to treat archipelagos or marine features as a whole entity without respecting the relevant provisions in Part II of UNCLOS or by using those in Part IV applicable only to archipelagic States. The UK would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm that its use of straight baselines is in compliance with Part II of UNCLOS.

The UK will continue to work with the international community to uphold UNCLOS.

Mr President, Turning now to the adoption of the resolution on sustainable fisheries, the United Kingdom joins others in welcoming the adoption of this vital resolution. We would like to thank Mr. Andreas Kravic of Norway, Coordinator of the sustainable fisheries resolution, for his facilitation of the informal consultations; the Division on the Law of the Sea for their ongoing support; and other delegations for their engagement in this important process, despite the constraints placed upon us by Covid-19.

The UN Fish Stocks Agreement continues to be a vital instrument for the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish, setting out that management must be based on the precautionary approach and on the best scientific information available.

The Informal Consultations of States Parties, the Review Conference and the sustainable fisheries resolution provide important fora for furthering this discussion. We look forward to participating in these discussions next year.

Thank you, Mr President.