

FCDO statement: Venezuelan National Assembly elections

Government response

FCDO statement on Venezuelan National Assembly elections on 6 December 2020



The United Kingdom does not recognise the result of the illegitimate Venezuelan National Assembly election held on 6 December 2020.

A Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office spokesperson said:

The Venezuelan National Assembly election on 6 December was neither free nor fair. It did not meet internationally accepted conditions, as called for by the International Contact Group on Venezuela including the UK, the Organisation of American States, the European Union, and others; nor did it meet the requirements of Venezuelan law. The UK considers the election to have been illegitimate and does not recognise the result.

The UK recognises the National Assembly democratically elected in 2015 and recognises Juan Guaidó as interim constitutional President of Venezuela.

It is vital that Venezuelans are given the opportunity to vote soon in presidential and legislative elections that are free, fair and effectively overseen. The UK considers that restoring democracy is an essential step towards ending the political, economic and humanitarian crises afflicting Venezuela's long-suffering people and calls on all its leaders to commit to supporting a solution to this end.

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[Stay vigilant and report suspicious activity](#)

With the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our lives, it is understandable that the threat from terrorism isn't necessarily front of mind for everyone across the country. But the threat of terrorism has not gone away.

Given national and regional restrictions, there will be a different look and feel to public locations and workplace environments over the festive season. However, the recent terror attacks in Europe and the change in the UK's terrorism threat level to SEVERE – meaning an attack is highly likely – are reminders of how important it is to stay vigilant whenever you are out and about.

This year in the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) we will again be joining policing colleagues and businesses across the UK to support and promote the Counter Terrorism Policing Winter campaign, together with promoting our Project Servator deployments and festive campaign material. All with the same purpose to PROTECT, by reminding everyone in the communities that we serve to remain vigilant and report suspicious activity.

In the same way that we must work collectively to tackle coronavirus, we must all take personal responsibility to play our part in staying alert to what we see and hear, and feel is going on around us. The collective efforts of police, security staff, retail workers and the public provide a powerful

defence against terrorism. Together communities defeat terrorism.

Assistant Chief Constable Andrea Bishop, MDP CONTEST Board Lead, said:

We have a strong network of vigilant eyes and ears in the communities in and around the sites where MDP officers are deployed and we work, throughout the year, with our policing and security partners and local employers and businesses, to give advice and guidance on safety and security measures. However, we must not be complacent, and I urge everyone to remain vigilant and to report anything suspicious or that just doesn't seem right.

A collective and proactive community effort to security will always be the most effective defence that we have against terrorism. We know a terrorist attack can happen anywhere and at any time and although the establishments we protect have an ingrained security focused culture, it is important that all staff and members of the public keep that focus and awareness in and outside the workplace. By working together, we can all help to keep each other safe.

MDP Project Servator teams will continue to be out on the ground throughout the Winter months and festive season, with deployments that can pop up at anytime and anywhere. Even at distance our officers can still spot the tell-tale signs of criminal activity. We will engage with you at safe distance to let you know that we're there to keep you safe and we will encourage you to report anything suspicious.

If you see or hear something suspicious, trust your instincts and report your concerns to police, security or staff. We'll do the rest.

Reports can also be made in confidence at www.gov.uk/ACT. To report suspicious activity to the MDP call 01371 854444. In an emergency always call 999.

Find out more about Project Servator, CONTEST and how you can help to defeat terrorism:

[Royal Navy warships monitor significant Russian presence close to](#)

UK waters

Every move made by the Russians – a surfaced submarine, destroyer, corvette, patrol ship and their supporting tugs and supply ships – was watched closely by eight Royal Navy ships from the English Channel to the Celtic Sea in a concerted operation over the last two weeks.

First Sea Lord, Admiral Tony Radakin, said:

This is why the Royal Navy is at sea every day, protecting the UK and our interests. Even with the pressures of Covid, we remain at short notice to respond to threats both in home waters and around the world. Despite the increase in Russian activity, both on the surface and underwater, we are always ready to respond.

Type 23 frigate HMS Northumberland watched the movements of Udaloy-class destroyer, the Vice-Admiral Kulakov, as she sailed North West of the Outer Hebrides, off the west coast of Scotland.

Patrol ship HMS Severn was on duty in the English Channel and Dover Strait, where she shadowed a surfaced Kilo-class submarine, the Stary Oskol, the corvette Boikiy, patrol ship Vasiliy Bykov and support ships.

Severn was also on patrol as the Vice-Admiral Kulakov sailed through the English Channel as she headed north.

For some of the operation, the Russian ships sheltered from bad weather within the Baie de Seine, a bay in northern France, where Severn was joined by allied French Navy ships and aircraft.

Commander Philip Harper, Commanding Officer of HMS Severn, said:

In very challenging conditions with rough weather, Severn and several other British and allied ships, have spent 20 days ensuring that Russian transiting warships remain under our watchful eyes.

HMS Lancaster joined Severn in this operation, closely tracking Steregushchiy-class corvette Boikiy in the English Channel and using her Wildcat helicopter to gather intelligence using the aircraft's powerful array of sensors.

Meanwhile, three Royal Navy warships – HMS Tyne, HMS Richmond and HMS Kent – combined to escort the same group of Russian ships as they operated in the Celtic Sea and approaches to the South West coast of the UK.

This task group were joined by RAF Typhoon and F-35s jets, plus tankers RFA Tideforce and RFA Tiderace, which kept the allied ships replenished

throughout the operations and contributed to monitoring duties while in the Irish Sea.

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