

36th Universal Periodic Review: UK statement on Honduras

World news story

The UK delivers statement on Honduras at the 36th Session of Universal Periodic Review (UPR), sharing recommendations to improve their human rights record.



The Universal Periodic Review takes place in Geneva.

Thank you, Madam President.

The United Kingdom welcomes the steps taken by the Honduran Government to engage constructively with NGOs and human rights defenders on the development of a Business and Human Rights National Action Plan.

We are also encouraged by the establishment of the National Protection Mechanism and the Ministry of Human Rights, although their lack of resource remains a concern.

As a signatory to the Global Pledge on Media Freedom, we call on the Government of Honduras to take substantive action to ensure the protection of journalists, and enable them to report without fear of harassment.

We recommend that Honduras:

1. Prioritise steps to combat the widespread rape and sexual exploitation of women and girls by gangs. Build institutional capacity for the protection of victims, through strengthening measures to proactively identify victims and refer them to appropriate support services.
2. Take all necessary steps to ensure recent reforms to Honduras' penal code meet international human rights obligations.

3. Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for UN Treaty Body elections.

Thank you, Madam President.

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[Hammersmith Bridge ferry services to reduce journey times for local residents and school children](#)

News story

As part of the London bailout, TfL has been required to procure a ferry service for passengers across the Thames near Hammersmith Bridge.



- as part of the recent TfL bailout, the Transport Secretary stated work on the ferry service be accelerated
- ferry will allow people to cross the Thames, reducing the extensive detour currently needed
- Government Taskforce continues rapid work to establish how bridge can be brought back into use

Today (5 November 2020) the government can announce that, as part of the London bailout, TfL has been required to procure a ferry service for passengers across the Thames near Hammersmith Bridge. The service will allow pedestrians and cyclists to travel point to point, avoiding a circular trip across other bridges.

The announcement follows the establishment by the Transport Secretary of a taskforce to bring together partners, including Hammersmith and Fulham

council and TfL, to provide rapid solutions to the bridge's closure.

As a condition of the £1.7 billion bailout provided to TfL on Saturday, the Government insisted TfL commence work both on the temporary ferry service and work to establish how Hammersmith Bridge could be brought back into use.

Procurement will start this week and a service active in the new year.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

For too long residents have suffered as those responsible have failed to deal with this issue. I'm pleased to say that, following our funding deal with TfL, alongside the excellent work of our Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce, this first step is becoming a reality.

We must of course crack on with longer term solutions and that's why I also insisted TfL allocate part of the bailout to examining how the bridge can be brought back into use. I look forward to seeing this work in the not too distant future.

The Minister in charge of chairing the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce, Baroness Vere, said:

As chair of the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce, I am pleased to oversee this important step.

The Taskforce quickly identified a ferry service as the most rapid solution available in the short-term and that's why we made it part of the TfL deal.

I look forward to working with the Taskforce to progress this as well as establishing how the bridge can be brought back into use.

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[New protections for renters over duration of national restrictions](#)

- Evictions will not be enforced whilst national restrictions are in place
- Evictions will not be enforced by bailiffs until 11 January 2021 at the earliest, except for the most egregious cases such as anti-social behaviour

- Six month notice periods still in place until at least the end of March 2021, except for most serious cases

Renters will be protected during the national restrictions, with no bailiff enforcement action, the Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick has announced today (5 November 2020).

Measures, including the pause on evictions starting in December, mean evictions will not be enforced until the 11 January 2021 at the earliest, supporting individuals and families who have found themselves in financial difficulty through no fault of their own.

The only exceptions to this will be the most egregious cases, including where tenants have demonstrated anti-social behaviour or are the perpetrator of domestic abuse in social housing, and the landlord rightly would like to re-let their property to another tenant.

This builds on protections announced earlier this year, including 6 month notice periods meaning renters now served notice can stay in their homes until May 2021, with time to find alternative support or accommodation.

Courts will remain open through the new national restrictions. Court rules and procedures introduced in September will ensure protections for both tenants and landlords. These include the strict prioritisation of cases, such as those involving anti-social behaviour and other crimes.

These protections are on top of the unprecedented package the government has put in place to help communities through the pandemic, including support for businesses to pay staff salaries and strengthening the welfare safety-net with an over £9 billion boost to the welfare system.

Housing Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We have already taken unprecedented action to support renters during the pandemic including introducing a 6 month notice period and financial support to help those struggling to pay their rent.

We are now going further by protecting renters from eviction during the new national restrictions and throughout the Christmas period – with a pause on bailiff activity other than in the most serious circumstances, such as anti-social behaviour or fraud.

Striking the right balance between helping tenants in need while ensuring landlords have access to justice in the most serious cases.

For those renters who require additional support, there is an existing £180 million of government funding for Discretionary Housing Payments for councils to distribute to support renters with housing costs.

Whilst national restrictions apply, the only circumstances where these

protections do not apply are illegal occupation, fraud, anti-social behaviour, eviction of domestic abuse perpetrators in social housing; where a property is unoccupied following the death of a tenant. We also intend to introduce an exemption for extreme pre-Covid rent arrears.

[The future that Bosnia and Herzegovina deserves](#)

Thank you, Mr President.

I thank the High Representative (HR) and his team for his latest comprehensive report. This highlights that the International community still has a role to play in supporting a secure, peaceful and sustainable future for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Office of the High Representative (OHR) continues to have an important role to play in galvanising action by local authorities to create this future. It has the United Kingdom's full support, including the use of executive powers should the situation require it.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, like nearly every other country, is now facing the challenges of responding to COVID-19. This will require continued focus and coordination by the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels as the number of cases rises. Despite these challenges, we are glad that preparation for the 2020 local elections has continued. Like High Representative Inzko, we commend the work of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Central Election Commission in the face of numerous political challenges, and support its endeavours to reduce risk of election fraud.

The UK would like particularly to welcome the agreement reached by the leaders of SDA and HDZ Bosnia and Herzegovina that enables local elections to be held in Mostar on 20 December for the first time since 2008. This breakthrough demonstrates the importance of cross-party and cross-community cooperation in propelling the country forward. We hope that all actors will support this important development and help the parties in Mostar to allow citizens to exercise their democratic rights.

I would also like to congratulate the OHR for its work in Brčko District. Its strong coordinated effort with the international community has continued to promote good governance, infrastructure development and private sector growth there. Collaborative work of this kind offers a potential model for reform elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ensuring citizens' ability to exercise their democratic right is vital. We urge the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to redouble their efforts to address outstanding ECtHR judgments, most notably the Sejdic-Finci ruling, and to ensure that all Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens can exercise their fundamental democratic rights and participate equally in their country's

future. Whilst we look forward to a time when they will not be necessary, international judges in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Constitutional Court continue to be a vital safeguard in Bosnia and Herzegovina's judiciary.

We continue to share the High Representative's frustration at the persistent threat of divisive nationalist rhetoric, even at a time when greatest solidarity is needed in the face of a global pandemic. With local elections imminent, we urge those responsible for these divisive statements instead to keep the citizens they were elected to represent at the forefront of their minds. Challenges such as migration, climate change and serious organised crime must be faced head on.

This year marks 25 years since the General Framework Agreement for Peace was signed, bringing an end to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is important that Bosnia and Herzegovina and the international community find ways to mark the anniversary collectively, and look ahead to the positive and prosperous future that Bosnia and Herzegovina deserves.

This follows the commemoration earlier this year of the 25th anniversary of the genocide at Srebrenica. I would like, once again, to remember the many thousands of victims, and the continued suffering of the families, too many of whom are still missing their loved ones. We acknowledge the suffering on all sides of the Balkans conflicts, and it is only through meaningful reconciliation across communities that we can fully overcome the painful legacies of the past. We once again call for an end to the glorification of convicted war criminals and the denial of the Srebrenica genocide. This definition has been officially recognised by two international tribunals as well as domestic judicial bodies, and denial merely serves to reinforce the deep societal divisions which threaten to block Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress.

The UK continues to support reconciliation efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans more widely, including through our project programming and our role in the Berlin Process and Peace Implementation Council. We encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to fully respect the rule of law, democracy, media freedom and human rights. We support Bosnia and Herzegovina's continued commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration, and look forward to the submission of the next NATO Programme of Reforms.

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[Have your say on exceptions to the Birmingham 2022 advertising and](#)

trading restrictions

Individuals and organisations who could be affected by measures to restrict advertising and trading in and around Birmingham 2022 Games locations are being encouraged to provide their views on a number of proposed exceptions.

The Birmingham Commonwealth Games Act contains offences concerning unauthorised advertising and unauthorised trading in certain places at certain times. These restrictions will help ensure we deliver on our hosting commitments for the Games. They will:

- protect the rights of commercial sponsors, whose contributions help to offset the public costs of the Games
- ensure Birmingham 2022 Games locations and their surroundings have a consistent look and feel in line with Commonwealth Games branding
- ensure people can safely access the venues and the free flow of spectators

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is working closely with the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee and our Games partners to ensure we take a proportionate approach – one that protects the rights of commercial sponsors and ensures that spectators can move easily and safely around Games locations while minimising disruption to existing businesses.

The consultation will run from 5 November until 11 January. Responses will be used to inform potential exceptions to the advertising and trading offences which we expect to be brought forward in secondary legislation later next year. An ‘exception’ is a form of advertising or trading activity (for example, public transport services) that will not be caught by the advertising and trading offences in the Act.

The restrictions will be in place in and around specified Games locations at specified times, and will only be in place when and where necessary, but there is the possibility that the restrictions could apply at any time between 7 July to 13 August (a maximum of 38 days).

A list of the Games locations that we currently expect to be affected is included in the consultation document. In most cases, we would expect the restrictions on advertising and trading to extend no more than a few hundred metres around each location’s perimeter. However, in some circumstances, restrictions may need to extend further to ensure that designated walking routes and key transport hubs are taken into account.

This consultation does not address the timing or vicinity of the restrictions, as this will be driven by when and how Games locations are used and is the subject of ongoing operational planning. Once they have been finalised, the locations and timings of the restrictions will be set out in secondary legislation.

For more information on the proposals, and to respond to the consultation,

please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/exceptions-to-birmingham-2022-advertising-and-trading-restrictions>

Background

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games (28 July to 8 August) is an unprecedented opportunity to showcase Birmingham and the West Midlands on a global stage. The Games will deliver lasting economic and cultural benefits to the whole of the region and support in renewal and recovery post-Covid-19.

With around £350 million in potential procurement, local and regional suppliers are well placed to benefit. 76% of Organising Committee contracts for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games went to local businesses and the Games contributed more than £740m to the Scottish economy.

In line with similar legislation that was introduced for the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, the UK Parliament has passed the [Birmingham Commonwealth Games Act](#). The act provides a small number of temporary operational measures to help deliver a successful Commonwealth Games and satisfy the requirements associated with hosting a major multi-sport event. The act and its measures are key in ensuring the Games are delivered successfully and the West Midlands benefits economically from the staging of the Games.

The act includes criminal offences relating to unauthorised advertising and trading in and around Games locations at specified times to ensure. These restrictions will help us to deliver on our hosting commitments for the Games by protecting the rights of commercial sponsors and ensuring that spectators can move easily and safely around Games locations.