

UN Human Rights Chief's report on Xinjiang, China: Foreign Secretary's statement

Press release

Liz Truss gave a statement after the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights report provided new evidence of China's human rights violations in Xinjiang.



UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The [report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) provides new evidence of the appalling extent of China's efforts to silence and repress Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang.

It includes harrowing evidence, including first-hand accounts from victims, that shames China in the eyes of the international community, including actions that may amount to crimes against humanity.

This includes credible evidence of arbitrary and discriminatory detention, torture, sexual and gender-based violence, violations of reproductive rights, and the destruction of religious sites. UN member states must now be given the opportunity to consider the report fully.

The UK has already led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions on senior Chinese government officials, and announced measures to help ensure no UK organisations are complicit in these violations through their supply chains.

We will continue to act with international partners to bring about a change in China's actions, and immediately end its appalling human rights violations in Xinjiang.

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1. 6 September 2022

Link to Civil Service Jobs updated providing latest information about the application

2. 1 September 2022

First published.

Almost £5million investment brings boost to Yorkshire environment

Press release

More than 82 hectares of habitat has been created or improved in the past year as part of the Environment Agency's programme of improvements across Yorkshire.



A leaky dam as part of the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape project

The programme, which includes almost 40 projects, also includes 15km of riverbank improvements and has seen 53,000 trees planted.

Projects include removing barriers to fish movement, habitat restoration, measures to improve water quality and natural flood management, which protect the natural environment, make rivers more resilient to climate change and boost wildlife.

The Yorkshire Environment Programme is managed and delivered by the Environment Agency working mainly in partnership with government-backed Catchment Partnerships, bringing together river and wildlife trusts, local authorities and other organisations to improve the environment.

There were over 100 partners involved in this year's £5million programme contributing more than £2.1million in funding to the projects.

Key projects progressed in 2021/22 include:

- The Upper Aire Habitat and Land Management Project has improved habitat and water quality across over 350km² through landowner engagement.
- Connecting the Calder is investigating five potential weir removals on the River Calder.
- Derwent Upland Streams has been working with landowners in the North York Moors National Park and surrounding areas to improve land

management and boost ecological status across eight waterbodies.

- The BEACH Esk project has worked with local communities and landowners to reduce marine pollution and increase habitats like saltmarsh in the Esk estuary.
- Other projects on the Esk include the ongoing Pearl Mussel captive breeding programme to drive the recovery of the endangered species, and research work to discover if invasive signal crayfish are present in the river.
- A new Yorkshire Coast Catchment Partnership was set up to bring together expertise to benefit the 320km Yorkshire coastline.
- Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership has reduced the run-off of water from the land and sedimentation in the Don and Rother Catchment and slowed the flow – reducing flood risk downstream.
- The Leven Canal was de-silted delivering 1.6km of improvements to what is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- The Rivers in Elmet project addressed sediment and nutrient pollution through tree and hedgerow planting and making improvements on farms.

Victoria Slingsby, Environment Planning and Engagement Manager for the Environment Agency in Yorkshire, said:

This year's environment programme has yet again seen some significant improvements right across the county, from natural flood management solutions, improved fish migration and interventions to enhance water quality.

The scale of delivery and achievement reflects the appetite of ourselves and our partners in Yorkshire to be at the forefront of managing environmental improvements for people and wildlife.

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Joint Statement of the Syria Contact Group

The United Kingdom joined representatives of the Arab League, Egypt, the European Union, France, Germany, Iraq, Jordan, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United States in agreeing to:

Reaffirm our commitment to reaching a political solution to the Syrian crisis consistent with UN Security Council resolution 2254, including continued support for implementing and sustaining an immediate nation-wide ceasefire, the Constitutional Committee, free and fair elections, the end of arbitrary

detention, and the release of all those unjustly held.

Reiterate the need to create secure conditions for the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons, consistent with UNHCR standards; and support the provision of sufficient and sustainable aid to the displaced and their host countries and communities until such conditions are in place.

Note with concern the continuing threat posed by Daesh and reiterated our commitment to the mission of the Global Coalition Against Daesh, and to the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Call on all parties, in particular the government-nominated bloc, to resume meetings of the Syrian-led and Syrian-owned Constitutional Committee under UN auspices in Geneva and to advance an inclusive political solution that will protect the territorial integrity, unity, and sovereignty of Syria and the rights and dignity of all Syrians.

Reiterate that there is no military solution to the Syrian crisis and reaffirmed our continued support of UN Special Envoy Geir Pedersen and his tireless efforts to advance a UN-facilitated political process consistent with UNSC resolution 2254.

Remain deeply concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in Syria and the ongoing suffering of the Syrian people. We emphasized the importance of continuing to provide life-saving and early recovery humanitarian assistance across Syria through all modalities, including expansion and extension of the UNSC resolution 2642 cross-border aid mechanism, for which there is no alternative that can match its scope and scale.

Furthermore, underline the necessity to continue to press for accountability for all atrocities and international crimes perpetrated in Syria, including the use of chemical weapons, as well as to press for a full accounting of the missing.

New Freeport in Wales will deliver regeneration and high quality jobs

- From today, applications are open to set up a new Freeport in Wales
- Bidders must set out how the Freeport will turbocharge the surrounding economy, deliver regeneration and create high-quality jobs
- Builds on UK Government's plan to level up whole of UK and is backed by £26 million UK government funding

The UK and Welsh Governments have today set out their shared ambitions for a new Freeport Programme in Wales as bidding opens for the innovative new site.

Bidders are encouraged to demonstrate how a Welsh Freeport will provide more high-quality local jobs, attract fresh investment to Wales, and support the country to become more sustainable to reach net zero by 2050.

Consortiums will have 12 weeks from today to assess the prospectus and prepare their bids, which will be jointly assessed by officials from the UK and Welsh governments in an open and transparent selection process.

It is expected that the successful site will be announced this winter and become operational in 2023.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Darparu ar gyfer y dyfodol! (Delivering for the future)

It is fantastic to mark this first step in opening up this tremendous opportunity for the people of Wales to reap the rewards of a Freeport – from Porthcawl to Prestatyn.

Freeports have the potential to place rocket boosters under communities with their huge power in driving, harnessing and delivering tangible growth – in the same way Wales has with its proud and historic role as the engine room of success for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Secretary of State for Levelling Up Greg Clark said:

A new Freeport will provide a huge boost to people in Wales, and I am delighted to open bidding as we continue our work with the Welsh Government to bring jobs and prosperity to the country.

The UK Government's Freeports Programme is already delivering benefits to businesses and communities across England.

I look forward to seeing similar benefits for Wales as we deliver a ground-breaking new Freeport and level up the whole of the United Kingdom.

Welsh Government Economy Minister Vaughan Gething said:

As an intrinsic part of our rich industrial history and the engine room of our economy, ports have huge potential to accelerate future industries which support net zero – from off-shore energy to advanced manufacturing.

Thanks to the agreement we have reached with the UK government, we are launching a Freeports Programme in Wales which offers an opportunity to harness Wales' abundant economic potential domestically and internationally by reimagining the role of ports,

whilst promoting fair work and sustainability.

The Welsh Government believes a better deal for workers is essential to a fairer and more equal Wales. So, I am looking for bids that break the industry ceiling on net zero standards, exemplify the high labour standards that promote fair work, and articulate a shared vision formed by long-lasting partnerships which genuinely involve all social partners.

I look forward to considering innovative bids which deliver meaningful economic and social benefits for Wales.

Backed by £26million in UK Government funding, a key aim of the Freeport Programme in Wales is to create jobs in new and exciting industries, boosting the local economy and regenerating the areas that need it most.

Applicants are being encouraged to show how the new Freeport will:

- help to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales
- support Wales to build a stronger, greener economy as it makes maximum progress towards decarbonization, with an emphasis on fair work and supporting the industries and services of the future
- form strong coalitions and partner with leaders in the private and public sectors to support businesses with a global reach, and businesses who aspire to a global reach, to achieve their ambitions.

Welsh Secretary Robert Buckland said:

The UK Government's ambitious Freeports agenda will help to level up communities and bring opportunities for people and businesses across the country.

By creating hundreds of local jobs and driving investment, the successful Welsh Freeport will bring significant benefits to its surrounding region.

This is hugely exciting for Wales and I look forward to seeing bids from as many potential sites as possible.

The UK Government and the Welsh Government have jointly agreed that they would be prepared to consider the case for a further additional Freeport in Wales, if a truly exceptional proposal were presented at the bidding stage.

Wales has already received millions from UK Government to support levelling

up. This has gone towards projects such as transforming Haverfordwest Castle into an attraction ready for all seasons, a facelift for the Queen's Ballroom in Tredegar and giving Llandrindod Wells a new lease of life in the form of affordable, energy efficient homes.

The progress made on a new Freeport for Wales builds on this ambitious agenda, delivering on our commitment to level up by spreading opportunity more equally across the whole of the UK.

Welsh Freeport bidding prospectus in [English](#) and [Welsh](#)

Applicants and multi-applicant partnerships must submit their proposals to both governments via the online bidding portal by 6pm on 24 November 2022. Potential bidders can register for portal access via the [Pre registration form](#).

Freeports are special areas within the UK's borders where different economic and customs regulations apply. Freeports are sites centred around one or a combination of air, rail, or seaport, within an encompassing outer boundary. [See more information on Freeports](#).