

## **Situation in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova: UK statement**

I'd like to thank the Republic of Moldova for drawing the Council's attention to the important issues mentioned in its statement to the Council.

The United Kingdom regrets the fact that since March this year the de facto authorities in Tiraspol have established and maintained additional check-points in the Security Zone. These check-points were set up without respect for agreed procedures for regulating activity in the Security Zone which should always be managed through the Joint Control Commission (JCC). The United Kingdom repeats its call to the de facto authorities to remove these checkpoints and to work at all times through the JCC on all matters of security in the Security Zone.

The United Kingdom is aware of a growing number of credible reports of abuse of human rights in Transnistria in recent months, including in the areas of freedom of expression, freedom of movement and the rights of detainees. We call on the de facto authorities in Tiraspol to consider their actions and their de facto responsibilities, and to actively work to prevent any further abuse of individuals' human rights in the territory under their de facto control.

The UK supports a peaceful, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Transnistrian conflict on the basis of recognition of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova, within its internationally recognized borders, and with a special status for Transnistria. We support the settlement process negotiations in the 5+2 format as well as meetings in the 1+ 1 format and in the Working Groups.

Thank you Chair.

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## **UK intervention in response to Ambassadors Çevik and Grau: UK statement**

Thank you Mr Chairperson. I would like to join previous speakers in thanking Ambassadors Çevik and Grau for briefing us today. I commend you, and your teams, for your crucial work in these difficult times.

The UK welcomes Ambassador Çevik's assessment of the impact of the additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire. The sustained reduction in ceasefire violations has also led to a reduction in civilian casualties and in damage to infrastructure since July; none have benefitted from this more than the innocent people of eastern Ukraine who have been suffering on a daily basis as a result of this Russia-fuelled conflict. It shows what can be achieved when there is political will and we applaud Ukraine for their flexibility and commitment in achieving these measures.

We support the crucial work of Ambassador Grau and the Trilateral Contact Group towards peace and stability in eastern Ukraine. Yet while the strengthened ceasefire has offered welcome respite, and we welcome progress towards opening two new Entry-Exit checkpoints, there still remains much to be done to achieve further progress. In particular, we call for the implementation of the agreed areas for demining and for further disengagement as soon as possible, before the upcoming winter weather makes this more challenging. We also call for the exchange of conflict-related detainees based on the principle of "all for all", and for the ICRC to be granted access to detainees in non-government controlled areas.

Sadly, the Russian Federation consistently fails to act constructively in TCG discussions. It is unacceptable that political issues under discussion in the Trilateral Contact Group are being used to block progress on vital security and humanitarian issues. Moreover, the obstructive raising of procedural obstacles is distracting from the TCG's vital work. We support the agreed, established processes of the TCG and its Working Groups and stress that these should be maintained. We call on Russia to engage productively, and match the political will demonstrated by Ukraine, so that real progress can be made.

Ambassador Çevik, we commend you and your entire Mission for your vital work in challenging circumstances. We value the leadership you have demonstrated during the pandemic and we support the sensible mitigation measures put in place by the Mission. We share your concern that, despite the partial release of the restrictions imposed by the Russia-backed armed formations on movement at official crossing routes at the Line of Contact, remaining restrictions still impede the Mission's freedom of movement; particularly by preventing the seamless crossing of the line of contact towards the non-government controlled areas.

It is unacceptable that these restrictions result in the Mission being obliged to work in three separate operational areas. Such actions undermine the ability of the SMM to fulfil its mandate, which all members of this Council, including Russia, committed to support.

The SMM also continues to face systematic restrictions on its freedom of movement within areas outside of Ukrainian government control. We call on Russia, as a party to the conflict, to use its influence with the armed formations to bring these restrictions to an end. We reiterate that the SMM and its assets must have full, safe and unimpeded access throughout the entire territory of Ukraine, including Crimea, which is part of Ukraine. This access is all the more critical, given serious concerns about Russia's ongoing violation of human rights in Crimea, as well as its militarisation of

the peninsula.

Ambassador Çevik, we read with sadness your Mission's regular reports of children, the elderly and pregnant women being unable to cross the line of contact, and of them being forced to sleep on the ground or on benches in the open, without proper facilities. This is unacceptable. We share concerns raised in your report that these restrictions on civilians' freedom of movement are impeding access to medicine and education, and preventing families from being reunited. While reasonable precautions should be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we call on the Russia-backed armed formations to refrain from imposing unnecessary limitations on civilians' freedom of movement.

Against this backdrop it is inspirational to hear of the SMM's "Women on the Contact Line" book, which demonstrates how women community leaders, and women SMM monitors, are working towards an inclusive resolution of the conflict. We thoroughly welcome its publication and the British Embassy Kyiv will be publicising it on their social media platforms as part of their "Women on the Frontline" campaign next week. The Ukrainian women role models in this book remind us of the importance of including the real voices of conflict-affected women in all aspects of decision-making. This must include decisions related to the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The UK reiterates our support for the Minsk agreements and our firm desire to see the peaceful resolution of the conflict in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We welcome the efforts of the Trilateral Contact Group and the Normandy Four in this regard and repeat our call for a full implementation of the outstanding commitments from last year's Paris Summit.

The UK strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial Integrity within its internationally recognised borders, including its territorial waters. We will continue to work with international partners on deterring Russian interference and aggression including in the Black Sea region. We do not and will not recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. The UK has consistently stood with Ukraine in opposing all instances of Russian aggression towards Ukraine and we will continue to do so, including through sanctions with our international partners.

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## **Former SSI steelworks site to be redeveloped under full local control**

- Local Mayoral Development Corporation to create a pioneering new business park at the site, as part of ambitious plans which could create more than 20,000 jobs
- follows government committing £233 million for on-site support

The government has today (8 October) sold its sole share in South Tees Site Company Limited, on the same day that the former site of the SSI Steelworks in Redcar comes under full control of the local Mayoral Development Corporation.

The South Tees Site Company Limited (STSC) – an interim government body owned by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) – has been responsible for the safe, secure and cost-effective management of the site since 2016, working on behalf of the Official Receiver who has been on site since the steelworks' liquidation in 2015.

Faced with one of the largest redevelopment opportunities in the country, the South Tees Development Corporation (STDC) now plans to create more than 20,000 jobs with a new business park on the wider 4,500 acre site, and fulfil the Tees Valley's vision to establish the area as a trailblazer in clean energy, low carbon and hydrogen technologies.

Earlier this year, the government unveiled £71 million to help support development of the pioneering business zone – bringing BEIS's total spend on site works to £233 million since 2015.

Redeveloping the site is at the centre of the government's levelling-up agenda to spread growth and prosperity to all corners of the UK, creating jobs and driving economic recovery.

Business and Industry Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

The former home of the Redcar steelworks is steeped in industrial history and, working hand in hand with the Tees Valley Mayor and the South Tees Development Corporation, we have been devising ambitious plans for the site's transformation.

As the government hands over control to local people, we have the upmost confidence in the ongoing work by the Mayor and local leaders to bring these plans to fruition – boosting the local economy, building back better and creating over 20,000 highly skilled jobs over the next two decades.

Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, Luke Hall MP said:

We want to level up every area of the country by ensuring local leaders have the investment they need to deliver for their communities.

I am delighted, together with the Mayor Houchen, we have been able to bring up to 20,000 new, highly skilled jobs to the Teesworks Site. This is a shining example of what we can achieve through effective partnerships between central government and metro-Mayors.

We will continue to work closely with the Mayor and the Tees Valley

Combined Authority as we progress our plans to spread opportunity and prosperity across the region.

The government has already committed £450 million towards the Tees Valley Combined Authority's plans to give young people access to skills training, introduce high quality broadband, and help people overcome barriers to getting into work.

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## Chair's speech to the Charity Law Association Annual Conference 2020

This is my first address before an audience of mainly lawyers since my appointment as Chair of the Charity Commission in 2018.

And I'm delighted to be here.

Of course, when I accepted the invitation, none of us were expecting the event to happen under these circumstances.

I would certainly far prefer to be meeting you in person.

But I would like to thank the CLA for keeping the show on the road, as it were, and for making these arrangements, allowing us to connect, if not quite in the way we would like.

The upheaval we've seen since March has been shocking.

Household name charities announcing job losses by the thousands alongside the closure of services is worrying. And I pay tribute to everyone having to deal with these challenges. Charities large and small. They are serious and they are urgent.

As the months have gone on, clear themes are emerging for charities, and those working with and advising the sector.

On the one hand, we have seen, again, how deep the roots of charitable endeavour reach into communities across this country.

Many of us have been moved by the speed and commitment of people – friends and strangers alike – to connect and help the vulnerable in their communities.

Only last weekend, for example, 45,000 people from across the UK and around the world signed up to run or walk the distance of the London Marathon on a route of their own choosing, and in line with COVID restrictions.

So far, their combined efforts have raised over £16m pounds for charity.

While there is hope to be drawn from events since March, recent months have demonstrated how reliant many charitable institutions are on the continuous support of people from all backgrounds and all walks of life.

This reminds us that if charities are to retain that support and remain as the leading vehicles of social and public good in a post-pandemic world – the sector, and the Commission, must work together to meet public expectations of what charity really means.

This is not just about meeting legal requirements. But about how charities pursue their objects and promote their cause; how they behave – towards donors, beneficiaries, their staff and volunteers, and all who come into contact with them.

And about the evidence charities provide for the difference they make.

These perfectly reasonable expectations of those whose support charities rely on, are also shared and understood by the majority of trustees.

Indeed, the evidence shows that trustees feel more strongly than the public that the way a charity goes about meeting its purpose is as important as whether it fulfils that purpose or not.

And they say they have a clear understanding about how public expectations ought to shape the way charities go about doing what they do. All of that is good.

My concern is that too big a proportion of trustees believe that, when people feel their expectations have not been met, it is because they haven't understood the complexities of running a charity.

That position needs to change if charities are to retain people's confidence. Before seeking any kind of hearing, charities need first to understand public expectations, take them seriously, and show they are by trying to meet them.

This is important, because the key challenge facing the sector into the future, is that the public support it relies upon cannot be taken for granted.

So today I want to talk about how all of us working with charities – including your own profession – can address this challenge and make the charity sector more resilient.

How we can learn from the COVID crisis and make Charity an even stronger force for good. It is not just charities that need to change for the sector as a whole to maximise the benefit it offers society and to meet public expectations.

When I launched the Charity Commission's new strategy two years ago, I made it clear that the Commission needed to change and be better in order to serve the public better.

Last year, the first full year of our 5-year plan, we set ourselves the aim of getting the basics right.

We will always strive to improve on our general standards of service, but in the 12 months to April this year, we made significant progress:

- clearing case working backlogs
- turning-around poor response rates from our contact centre and investing in it further to improve the service people receive from us on the phone
- improving our approach to dealing with reports of serious incidents, and to working with whistle-blowers

We have now published operational service standards so our users know what to expect and can hold us to account. And we will report against them each year.

We are also changing how we do our work – driven by our clear strategic purpose of maximising the benefit of charity by upholding its good name.

We recently relaunched the online Register of charities. It now includes more information about each charity than ever before – so that people can find what they want to know before choosing where to lend their support.

This greater transparency is about increasing the accountability of the sector.

And, as we are able to release yet more data via the Register, a clearer and more detailed picture will be possible of charity provision across England and Wales – including where there are gaps in supply.

One of our key priorities in this our second year, is making it easier, simpler, for trustees to do the right thing, and to interact with us.

It's why we're investing in digital services to support trustees better.

And it's why we're working on our guidance, making sure it becomes more accessible and more targeted. I'm grateful for the involvement of the CLA Executive Committee in this work.

We need to break down bureaucracy where it neither serves the public or charities, and that's especially so in our casework.

It is essential that we arrive at clear regulatory outcomes in an efficient manner – so that we as the regulator meet public expectations in the actions we take, when charities themselves have failed to do so.

As I set out at the Commission's Annual Public Meeting last week, our powers, notably in relation to the Register, need to reflect the reality of charitable endeavour in our society.

The lockdown reminded us how much of what people recognise as charity happens outside of formal charitable institutions.

In other words, to most people charity is more about standards and less about

structures. And there have been some great charitable standard-bearers emerge from nowhere in the last few months and make a massive difference in their local communities.

Our Register needs to be easily accessible to people who represent the best of us. Whether it's channelling their endeavours into existing charities, or setting-up new charities – perhaps in those areas which have been neglected in the past.

The recommendation around, what he calls probationary registration, made by the Member of Parliament Danny Kruger in his report on civil society last month, warrants serious consideration for that reason alone.

Formalised charity must not be the preserve of those who have the means to navigate the legal framework.

It must be accessible to people who can bring a different perspective, experience, worldview, background – and by the way that diversity would also bring other benefits to the sector.

In parallel with being more open, the Commission also needs to be better able to remove charities from the Register when things go seriously wrong, especially when a charity is delivering little public benefit. Clearly, we need to safeguard charity assets. But in such circumstances the public interest is rarely served by us intervening intensively in a failing charity. Yet that's often what the law directs us to do.

The public associates registered status with more than simply meeting a legal test. They expect it to offer a level of assurance about the organisation's behaviour, its efficiency and its effectiveness.

As regulator, we need a Register which better meets these expectations and one which allows us to uphold the reputation of the status on which all charities rely.

As our plans in these areas develop, and you start to consider and comment on the detail of our proposals as they emerge, I would urge the legal profession to work with us to help to ensure that the sector is stronger and more resilient.

Which brings me to the role of charity lawyers in helping charities meet public expectations so that all your clients retain the support they need to survive and thrive.

Being alive to the meaning and purpose of charity in the public mind is not just important in the context of debates about the legal framework.

I also urge you to consider it important in your day-to-day work advising individual charities, including on their interaction with the Commission, and any challenges they decide to make to our decisions.

Now, just to be clear, the Commission will always operate within its legal framework – in line with our statutory objectives and duties and properly



using the powers which Parliament has given us.

It is possible for us to get something wrong. And of course, it's necessary that charities can test and challenge the Commission's decisions, including in the tribunal and the Courts. And if we do get it wrong, we must and will say so.

But the Commission has changed the way we meet our statutory objectives. We are driven by our purpose and the public we serve. In other words, we regulate for a reason – and that is to ensure that charity delivers full benefit to society, which requires its good name to be upheld and public expectations to be met.

Likewise, we expect trustees who do challenge the Commission's regulatory decisions, to be motivated by the aims their charity pursues. Trustees have legal duties to protect their charity and promote its purposes. But they have a moral responsibility to demonstrate attitudes and behaviour that serve the longer-term interests of their cause, and the public good. If they fail to do so, they don't just risk their own reputation, they risk bringing Charity as a whole into disrepute.

I have seen action, including litigation, that seems motivated by, or part of, a wider, aggressive response to the Commission's legitimate regulatory scrutiny.

Where trustees choose repeatedly to challenge our casework, rather than working constructively to help us discover the truth, and form judgements about how best to resolve a problem in the best interest of the charity's purpose.

And I have seen challenges that seem less motivated by the best interests of the charity's purpose and beneficiaries, and more about shielding individuals from accountability to protect their personal reputations. They certainly demonstrate no sense of a collective responsibility for upholding the standards associated with registered charity status and therefore put at risk the reputation upon which all of your clients rely. Such cases may be relatively few and far between. But they are damaging.

We will always defend our legitimate regulatory scrutiny and the decisions we take to serve the public interest.

We have a strong track record in doing so.

But we should also acknowledge the inevitable resource – the cost in money and time – such cases absorb for all parties.

For the charities involved, we're talking of course about charitable funds that could be helping beneficiaries.

And for the Commission, public funds that we could be using to improve services for the majority of trustees who want to do the right thing.

So my ask of charity lawyers, of the CLA and its members is this:

When advising charity clients, including in the context of Commission case work, help trustees focus on the bigger picture. Think also of how you can help them fulfil their purpose in all senses and in a way that inspires trust and confidence. Of course, you must serve your clients as the well-credentialed advisers on the technicalities of the law that you are, but I urge you also to offer, where you can, wise counsel on the surrounding context too.

I must add that, where you are already doing this, thank you and please keep doing so.

Do please help trustees recognise that the letter of the law sets out the minimum standard they must meet.

It does not fully serve as a bar against which to measure whether or not they are doing the right thing.

Make sure that they understand their moral obligation to maintaining the reputation of Charity. The status which they rely on to attract vital public support.

Ensuring that Charity thrives into the future requires everyone involved to play their part well. Lawyers included.

These are tough times for charities, and for the society in which we all live.

Now more than ever, the public benefit from charitable endeavour is a powerful force for good – which we can't afford to lose.

So let's all be clear what's at stake.

Understand the challenge.

And meet it.

Thank you.

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## **Disclosure and Barring Service makes senior appointments**

Press release

DBS has made several appointments to its Strategic Leadership Team.

# DBS Strategic Leadership Team

New appointments

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made several senior appointments to its Strategic Leadership Team.

Among those appointed are a new Executive Director of Strategy and Performance, Finance, Business Transformation, Human Resources and Organisational Development, a Board Secretary and a Commercial Director.

In a first for the organisation, all interviews with candidates were conducted using video technology to ensure social distancing guidelines could be followed and to reduce the need for people to travel.

DBS issues nearly six million disclosure checks a year and is also responsible for maintaining the Adults' and Children's Barred Lists. The organisation employs over 1,000 staff who work out of offices in Liverpool and Darlington and funds over 40 police disclosure units.

The recently recruited directors will be responsible for delivering the organisation's strategy and reporting to the DBS board on a monthly basis.

DBS continues to play a leading role in the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing DBS checks on nearly 200,000 medical professionals, carers and volunteers who have answered the nation's call to arms as the United Kingdom fights the virus.

Chief Executive of DBS Eric Robinson said:

I am delighted to be able to appoint a number of senior leaders to the organisation. Due to retirement and colleagues leaving us for pastures new, our leadership team was left with several gaps that needed filling. Those recruited are able to bring with them years of strategic leadership and vision as well as specific expertise needed by the organisation if we are to achieve our ambition.

He added:

It is an exciting time for DBS as we have just published our new 5-year strategy that will see the organisation transform to become truly customer focussed ensuring that we embrace technology to improve our services. We certainly utilised modern ways of working

when recruiting for these roles and it was the first time, I had conducted interviews on video but I have to say, it was a really good process and one that I would consider again in the future.

For more information about our management, please visit our [GOV.UK home page](#) where you will find the 'Our management' section.

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