

[Letter from Baroness Berridge to academy trust members](#)

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[Lebanese Army Commander ends two-day visit to the UK](#)

During his visit to the United Kingdom at the invitation of the UK Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter, Lebanese Army Commander General Joseph Aoun alongside General Sir Carter met with Rear Admiral Simon Asquith, Commander Operations for the Royal Navy, Mr David Quarrey, the Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser and Deputy National Security Adviser, and other senior Defence and security officials.

The visit was an opportunity to appreciate the UK's support to Lebanon and its army. Discussions focused on UK support to the LAF and ways to expand the partnership to fight terrorism and support land and sea border security. Discussions also covered the LAF's role in protecting human rights and the right to peaceful protest, and the importance of the LAF upholding the highest standards and being transparent as a general principle in implementing all his missions.

At the end of the visit Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter said:

The Lebanese and UK Armed Forces have a long and proud history of working together. As part of today's visit we discussed how best we can continue to build on our Defence relationship. Our personnel continue to serve and train alongside each other and we remain committed to providing support in the region on countering extremism and reinforcing border security.

Lebanese Army Commander General Joseph Aoun expressed his deep thanks to his British counterpart for his invitation, reiterating the strong relationship between both armies and expressed his confidence in continuing cooperation in the interest of the two friendly countries:

This visit is to thank the United Kingdom for its effective participation in supporting border security, and to reinforce cooperation and work towards continued support to the Lebanese Armed Forces amidst the huge challenges facing it, especially in fighting terrorism and border security.

Following up on the visit British Ambassador Chris Rampling said in a statement:

General Aoun's visit to the UK comes at a critical time. There are many challenges facing the LAF. We have seen in recent weeks a demonstration of the ongoing terrorist threat in Lebanon, while the economic situation has put more pressure on the Lebanese security agencies. The UK is a friend of Lebanon and will continue to stand by its people including in times of need.

Between 2016 and 2020, the UK Government has spent over \$100 million on training mentoring and equipping the LAF, in particular the four Land Border Regiments to counter illegal crossing operations. UK experts supervised the building of 41 border watchtowers and 38 Forward Operating Bases along the northern and eastern borders, and donated 13 mobile observation systems. A specialised Land Border training facility has been established in the Bekaa with over 8,000 LBR troops trained in border operations. In addition to the borders, by the end of 2020, the UK will have trained over 14,000 soldiers for internal security operations across Lebanon in 3 urban training facilities.

Diplomatic Correspondents Association Bangladesh (DCAB) Talk 2020: British High Commissioner emphasised on continued commitment of the UK Government to Bangladesh

British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson addressed the Diplomatic

Correspondents Association Bangladesh (DCAB) at a very significant point of time when the UN was holding its 75th General Assembly (UNGA) virtually for the first time.

The High Commissioner conveyed the UK contributors to the UN, particularly on the UK's call for countries to put differences aside, reach across borders and work together to fight COVID-19. At this year's UNGA, the UK demonstrated its global leadership by outlining its support for the World Health Organisation (support of £340 million over the next four years) and COVAX (support up to £571 million), to develop safe, effective and affordable vaccines that can be produced quickly and made available for all. Moreover, the High Commissioner emphasised the UK's call on world leaders to announce genuinely transformational net zero targets and bold climate finance pledges. He familiarised the DCAB members with the UK's effort at UNGA to bring together political, financial and technical leaders in the global power sector to accelerate the transition to clean energy by launching the COP26 Energy Transition Council.

The High Commissioner stressed on the collective effort to tackle COVID-19 and search for a vaccine. He highlighted the virtual vaccines event at UNGA, co-hosted by Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab. This event built on the success of the GAVI Summit, which was hosted in June 2020, where \$8.8 billion was raised to ensure globally equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, treatments, and testing.

This UNGA showed that the fundamental of the UK-Bangladesh relationship lies in working together on shared challenges. In this context, the High Commissioner mentioned the UK's support to Bangladesh through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to assess the capacity and preparedness of Bangladesh's cold-chain framework – creating a roadmap and model for global COVID-19 vaccination. He further added that– beyond the efforts of the UK government, the UK are playing a leading role on developing COVID-19 vaccination.

In order to take urgent action for a better world, the UK is playing a leading role with the presidency of the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). The British High Commissioner outlined the close link in climate action policy terms between Bangladesh and the UK. He shared some major engagements of the UK with Bangladesh, especially with key climate experts, the Government of Bangladesh and the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF). He also reiterated that tackling the climate and environment issues will be a major focus of the UK's development cooperation programmes with Bangladesh.

While discussing the UK's support to Bangladesh to respond humanitarian crisis, the High Commissioner talked about his recent visit to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar with the representatives of the US, UN, EU, Canada and the World Bank. He reiterated the UK's continued commitment to work with the Government of Bangladesh and international partners to respond to the Rohingya crisis. He shared his view on the remarkable efforts to contain the primary effects of COVID-19 in the Rohingya refugee camps and local communities in Cox's Bazar.

The British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson said

“Though the primary impact of COVID-19 is not high at the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar, there clearly have been some very significant secondary impacts because it’s been hard to provide services to the refugees during the pandemic. We encouraged— with any additional and necessary measures, full humanitarian access be maintained to the camps and that consultations with affected communities continue to take place.”

The UK is the second largest donor to the international response to the Rohingya refugee crisis having contributed more than £256m since 2017 to support both refugees in the camps and host communities including in building resilience against COVID-19. At the same time, the UK is conscious that the key to a long term solutions is for the Rohingya refugees to be able to make a safe, dignified and voluntary return to their homes in Rakhine state in Myanmar.

The High Commissioner reminded the DCAB members about the UK continues to play an international leadership role to keep the situation in Myanmar and the plight of the Rohingya at the agenda of multilateral diplomacy. As an ally of Bangladesh, the UK wants to see accountability for atrocities committed in Myanmar, and will monitor closely the ICC investigation in Bangladesh.

Further on the context of UK and Bangladesh working together on shared challenges since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the British High Commissioner outlined programmes that will demonstrate the depth and significance UK-Bangla ties next year when Bangladesh celebrates 50 years of independence.

The High Commissioner said

“The UK has been a part of Bangladesh throughout that journey and we’re really looking forward in the High Commission to building on all the links that exist between Bangladesh and the UK, including the diaspora, the 600,000 people living in the UK with Bangladeshi heritage who are a very important people to people link, but the much wider range of links that exist between us on security, defense, climate, COVID-19, trade, and a whole range of issues on which we work very closely with friends and partners in and beyond government in Bangladesh.”

The UK is already Bangladesh’s second largest investor with total bilateral trade of around £4 billion a year. Export Credit Agency UK Export Finance (UKEF) has recently more than tripled its capacity for Bangladesh to £2.5 billion, which expect to make it easier for British companies to sell high quality goods and services into Bangladesh. At the same time, UK government’s private sector development organisation the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) has invested more than £250 million in Bangladesh over the last ten years. CDC has now established a country presence here for the first time. So we are seeing a lot of interest among British businesses and the UK government in really building this trade and development relationship as Bangladesh continues to go through the process of graduating from a Least

Developed to a Middle Income Country.

While talking to DCAB, the British High Commissioner termed UK-Bangladesh ties as “an exciting and interesting relationship.” He looks forward to 2021 as we intend to bring together all the different aspects of the relationships as Bangladesh is about to become a middle income country. He emphasised that the UK considers Bangladesh a valuable partner as the UK recalibrates its international relations following the exit from the EU.

The British High Commissioner concluded the discussion by stating the vision for newly formed Foreign, Development and Commonwealth Office (FCDO). In Bangladesh, the integrated FCDO offers the opportunity to build on the successes that the DFID presence and partnerships have offered over decades, and to continue the UK commitment to support long term sustainable development, stability, and prosperity for Bangladesh, drawing on the strengths of both former departments, FCO and DFID.

The High Commissioner also admired the work of Bangladeshi journalists in support of the cause of media freedom which is crucial to the function of democracy.

[Virtual Climate Vulnerable Forum Leaders' Event: Lord Ahmad's statement](#)

Honourable Prime Minister, UN Secretary-General, Excellencies, distinguished guests, it is an honour to be with you virtually and to record this message on behalf of Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Climate change and nature have taken centre stage at the UN General Assembly this year. This builds on last year's UN Climate Action Summit, where the UK, Bangladesh, and others, launched the Call to Action on Adaptation and Resilience, strengthening support for vulnerable communities whilst building a resilient future for all people, environments, and economies.

I am pleased to see the work the Climate Vulnerable Forum is doing, amplifying the voices of those most affected by climate change, and this call for countries to be more ambitious on mitigation, adaptation, and climate finance.

UK and Bangladesh

This event is testimony to Prime Minister Hasina's enduring leadership on tackling climate change, both domestically and on the international stage.

Bangladesh's leadership on resilience was clearly demonstrated in the early warning and evacuation of millions of people from the path of super Cyclone

Amphan (um-pan) in May.

I was pleased Lord Goldsmith, UK Minister for the Environment, was able to pay a virtual visit to Bangladesh in August, where he observed Bangladesh's work on adaptation and nature-based solutions.

The opening last month of the regional office of the Global Centre on Adaptation in Dhaka further cements the role Bangladesh can play in sharing expertise across the region and accelerating progress.

The UK, as COP26 President-elect, is committed to working with all countries and to joining forces with civil society, companies, and people on the frontline of climate change to inspire action ahead of COP26 next year.

Climate change and COVID-19

As the world recovers from COVID-19, we must work together to ensure economic recoveries are green and resilient and support our shared objectives for the climate.

In doing so, we must help those worst-affected by the double tragedy of COVID-19 and climate change to adapt and come back stronger.

Coronavirus has provided a stark reminder of what happens when humanity's relationship with nature breaks down. As we recover, we have an opportunity to protect and restore nature, reducing our exposure both to deadly viruses and climate impacts. The Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are crucial frameworks for guiding the recovery.

Climate finance

Climate finance is a critical component of both the COP26 and the Paris Agreement. Securing the Paris temperature goals will require funding that favours low-carbon and resilient development.

The UK has committed to doubling our International Climate Finance expenditure to at least \$11.6 billion between 2021 and 2025, and we are asking other donor countries to match the scale of our ambition.

We are eager to support climate-vulnerable countries in making a just transition to clean energy. This is critical to ensuring emissions are reduced in time to limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

Ambition Summit

This means that we need radical change.

As Prime Minister Johnson announced in September, the UK, along with the UN Secretary-General, will host a virtual leader-level Ambition Summit on the 12th of December, the 5-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement.

The Summit will provide a platform for leaders who are ready to come forward

with greater ambition for adaptation; climate finance and mitigation through Nationally Determined Contributions; long-term strategies for getting to net zero; and new climate finance pledges and adaptation plans.

We all have a role in increasing global momentum on climate action.

Conclusion

We owe it to current and future generations to base our recovery on solid foundations, including a fairer, greener, and more resilient global economy.

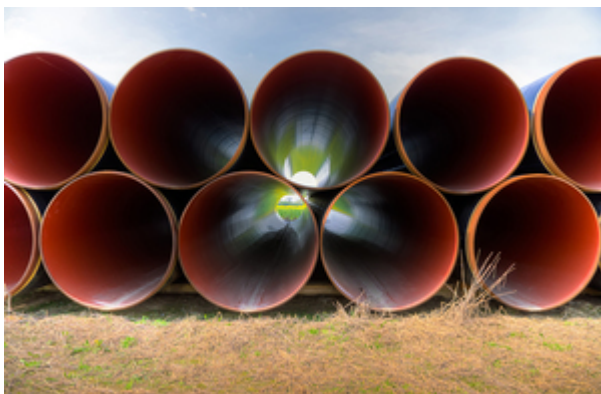
On behalf of the United Kingdom, I thank Bangladesh and the CVF for their leadership on this journey. Together we can agree an ambitious, shared plan of action at COP26. The whole world is literally depending on us to make significant and faster progress.

Thank you.

Southampton to London Pipeline Project granted development consent

Press release

Yesterday, Wednesday 7 October 2020, the application for the proposed Southampton to London Pipeline Project has been granted development consent by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.



Development consent has been given for the Southampton to London Pipeline Project, which aims to replace 90km of Esso Petroleum Company Limited's 105km aviation fuel pipeline that runs from Fawley Refinery near Southampton to Esso's West London Terminal Storage Facility in Hounslow.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by Esso Petroleum Company Ltd on 14 May 2019 and accepted for Examination on 11 June 2019.

Following an Examination during which the Applicant, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to provide evidence to the Examining Authority, a Recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 7 July 2020. The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

This is the 95th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and 59th Energy project to have been examined and decided within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008. The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the Examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the Local Authorities and other Interested Parties were able to participate in a 6-month long Examination. The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views before making their Recommendation.

The Decision, the Recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its Recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#)

ENDS

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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