

Fifth anniversary of the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar: joint ministerial statement

Press release

Joint ministerial statement marking the 5th anniversary of the Myanmar military's attack against Rohingya and ensuing crisis.



The following is the text of a joint statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union, and the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States, marking the fifth anniversary of the Myanmar military's attack against Rohingya.

Five years ago, the Myanmar military launched a violent attack on Rohingya communities in Rakhine, killing, raping, and torturing thousands of Rohingya men, women, and children and forcing over 700,000 to seek refuge in Bangladesh – where they joined other Rohingya, who had fled earlier attacks and decades of systemic discrimination. These deplorable actions against Rohingya precipitated one of the largest mass exoduses of a minority in recent history. We are concerned by the UN Fact Finding Mission's establishment of consistent patterns of serious human rights violations and abuses, of which many amount to grave crimes under international law. We also recognize other initiatives to hold perpetrators accountable, including The Gambia's efforts before the International Court of Justice, which is currently examining whether the atrocities committed by the Myanmar military against Rohingya amounted also to genocide. We reiterate that Myanmar must comply with the International Court of Justice's provisional measures order.

The same actors that committed these reprehensible actions led the military coup d'état in February 2021, and today continue to

perpetrate atrocities against political dissidents and vulnerable populations, including other ethnic and religious minorities across Myanmar, and have done so for decades. The Rohingya themselves suffer human rights violations and abuses, discrimination, systematic persecution, and denial of access to basic services – including the right to citizenship. Around 150,000 Rohingya have been confined to camps without freedom of movement in Rakhine for a decade. Women and girls continue to be at extreme risk under the current conditions.

As we mark five years since the brutal 2017 campaign against Rohingya, we commend the courage of Rohingya communities and remember all the victims. We reiterate our commitment to holding the perpetrators of these violations and abuses to account, and acknowledge the work of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar and others contributing to this objective. We call on the military regime to cease its violence against those who have suffered under its rule, including the decades of grave human rights violations and abuses endured by Rohingya and other communities in Myanmar. We thank the UN relevant bodies, Bangladesh, and other hosting nations for their generosity and providing lifesaving support to Rohingya and remain dedicated to supporting Bangladesh to ensure that the needs and rights of all refugees and impacted host communities are met. We also appreciate the important efforts of humanitarian organizations to extend protection and assistance for Rohingya communities. At the same time, we call on the international community to help to ensure justice for Rohingya victims, support host communities, and foster conditions that will allow for the safe, voluntary, dignified, and sustainable return to their communities. Rohingya must be meaningfully included in discussions around the future of Myanmar.

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[Philippines eligible for duty free access to exported goods to UK through DCTS](#)

The UK is reshaping trade with developing countries through this new trading framework that will replace the UK Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) and will come into force in early 2023. The Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) was [announced by the Prime Minister](#) at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) on 23 June and launched on 16 August by the

Secretary of State for International Trade.

Total trade (goods and services) between the UK and Philippines amounts to £2 billion each year. Under the DCTS, the Philippines will continue to benefit from duty free exports to the UK on more than 80% of eligible products. This will help Philippines save up to £21 million a year. In addition, the DCTS will remove tariffs on over 150 additional products. The DCTS will also simplify some seasonal tariffs, meaning additional and simpler access for the Philippines' exports to the UK.

The DCTS also offers generous rules of origin, making it easier to produce goods using components from other countries without losing duty-free status. It will be one of the most generous sets of trading preferences of any country in the world, helping to grow trade, boost jobs and drive economic growth.

Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Philippines, Laure Beaufile said:

The launch of the Developing Countries Trading Scheme is a great opportunity for the UK and the Philippines to build on our strong existing bilateral trade and investment relationship. More than 80% of exported Filipino products, and 99% of total goods by value exported from the Philippines, will be eligible for duty free access to the UK. The scheme will boost our trade and provide new opportunities for Filipino and British businesses.

The DCTS benefits 65 developing countries and is more generous and simpler than the existing UK Generalised Scheme of Preferences. It has been designed to harness the power of trade to help developing countries grow and prosper. As one of the most generous preferential trading schemes in the world, the DCTS demonstrates the UK's commitment to building long term, mutually beneficial relationships with emerging economies that are home to more than 3.3 billion people.

The scheme includes zero tariffs on almost £4.5 billion of imports of clothing and apparel, £300 million of foodstuffs and millions of pounds worth of other consumer products such as bicycles and children's toys. DCTS covers 37 countries in Africa, 18 in Asia, 8 in Oceania and 2 in the Americas.

Read [detailed information on the Developing Countries Trading Scheme and policy response](#).

Department for International Trade, British Embassy Manila

Email: DIT.Manila@fcdo.gov.uk

New recruitment campaign for Victims' Commissioner launched

Press release

The Government has relaunched the recruitment process for the Victims' Commissioner in line with the standard public appointments process.



The competition will run from today (25 August) until 19 September with the successful candidate taking on the role in the following months.

It comes as the Government embarks on landmark reforms for victims, including new legislation to ensure they are better heard, served and supported by the criminal justice system. The role of the Commissioner will be crucial in delivering this – promoting the interests of victims and witnesses and ensuring all parts of the criminal justice system meet the standards set out in the Victims' Code.

The Government is investing nearly half a billion to provide the swift justice that victims deserve, and progress continues on the Rape Action Plan in order to increase the volume of prosecutions flowing through the system.

Dame Vera Baird has agreed to continue in post until 30 September, with an option to extend until the end of the year and has been invited to reapply.

Notes to editors

The job advert can be found at <https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/appointment/victims-commissioner-for-england-and-wales-2/>

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Archaeologists working to learn more before 2,500 year-old Lulworth hill fort is lost to the sea

Vulnerably perched on the edge of an unstable cliff, the impressive 2,500 year old Flower's Barrow hillfort is being lost to the sea due to erosion. As a result, it is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.

The excavation is gathering as much information as possible about the site and those who lived there before it is lost. This will be added to other information, including detailed surveys being undertaken by Historic England, which will increase our understanding of the site and the surrounding historic landscape. Preserving as much as possible by record will create a valuable resource for current and future generations to study and understand.

The excavation has been arranged in an attempt to gather as many details as possible about the site and those who lived there before it is lost. This will be added to information already gathered by several Historic England surveys to increase understanding of the site, such as location of ramparts. If Historic England is satisfied that there is no more information which practically be learned, the site can be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.

Military veterans are taking part under a programme called Operation Nightingale. This award-winning scheme sees wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans taking part in archaeological digs on the Defence estate.

Guy Salkeld, the DIO archaeologist who is organising and leading the excavation, said:

Looking after our land and heritage is really important to the MOD and archaeology on military land is often better preserved than it would otherwise be, as it's protected from development and industrial agriculture.

Unfortunately, even the MOD is powerless against the might of the sea. That's why it's really important that we gather as much information as possible about Flowers Barrow while we still can. My hope is that this excavation fills in the gaps in our knowledge of the site and ultimately, that we learn enough for it to come off the Heritage at Risk Register.

Craig Appleby, former Royal Engineer and member of the Op Nightingale programme said:

Being part of the Op Nightingale team offers huge benefits, both for physical and mental well-being. Working on archaeological digs enables you to slow down and focus on something positive. In addition, taking part in these excavations with like-minded people provided a real sense of purpose and camaraderie.

Daniel Bashford, Heritage at Risk Project Officer at Historic England, said:

Climate change has increased the natural erosion of our coastline which affects the preservation of heritage sites such as Flowers Barrow. We are pleased to be working with the MOD and Wessex Archaeology on this Operation Nightingale project – it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to increase our understanding of this vulnerable hillfort before it is lost to the sea.

Oliver Good, Project Manager for Wessex Archaeology explains:

Through our archaeological surveys and excavations we are building on our understanding of how people lived thousands of years ago. This hill fort site contains a number of hut platforms and these represent the remains of individual Iron Age round houses.

Our work at Flowers Barrow is vital and we are hoping that through our excavations we will increase our understanding of domestic life at that time. However, to be able to support veterans through Operation Nightingale makes our work at Flowers Barrow this year even more special for the Wessex Archaeology team.

Previous finds at Flowers Barrow include what is thought to be slingshot and it is hoped that this year's excavation will uncover the location of several houses and possibly domestic finds such as pottery. The team will also clear scrub from the site which will allow Historic England to carry out a drone survey. This will be used to create a detailed model of the site to demonstrate changes over time.

For more information please contact:

Helen Pickering, DIO press officer on 07980 960530 or helen.pickering101@mod.gov.uk.

Consultation launched to support sustainable fishing of non-quota fish stocks

The Government has today launched a [consultation to gather evidence on the impact of flyseining](#) in English waters to support sustainable fishing and reduce pressure on fish stocks.

Flyseining, also known as flyshooting or demersal seining, is a fishing method involving long weighted ropes to herd fish into the mouth of the trawl to target demersal species which live or feed on or near the sea bed, such as red mullet, gurnards and squid. Many of these fish are non-quota stocks (NQS) meaning there is no limit on how many can be fished.

The practice has been around for decades but recently larger flyseining vessels, belonging to a number of different countries, are now operating in the English Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with double the gross tonnage, engine power and vessel length of traditional vessels.

Parts of the fishing industry and environmental organisations have raised concerns about the impact on fish stocks, particularly those on which we currently only have limited data. Measures under consideration include restricting the number of vessels with flyseining gear, the power of their engines and placing limits on the fishing gear.

Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis said:

“We want our fishing industry to thrive for generations to come and we must ensure our stocks are sustainably managed.

“That’s why we are consulting on potential measures to mitigate the impacts of flyseining on non-quota stocks. I encourage all those from the catching sector and wider fishing industry to share their views”.

Through the Fisheries Act 2020, the UK Government has identified a number of potential measures that could be applied to the fishing of non-quota stocks in English waters to safeguard the future sustainability of these species. Proposals for this consultation include:

- Introducing an ‘entitlement’ which would restrict the number of vessels with flyseining gear (0-200 nautical mile zone); and/or
- Restricting engine power for demersal seine gears to 221kW or 600kW in 0-12 nm zone; and/or
- Removing an exemption that currently allows a 40mm mesh size in a directed squid fishery (0-200nm); and/or
- Restricting vessels’ rope diameter used in flyseine gear to 30-40mm

(0-200nm); and/or

- Restricting vessels' rope length used in flyseine gear to 1500m if in 0-12nm and/or 3000-3200m if in 12-200nm.

This consultation complements work to develop a Fisheries Management Plan for demersal non-quota species in the Channel, and will also look at longer term management approaches for a number of the species targeted by larger flyseine vessels.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks from 25 August until 17 November 2022. Further engagement with industry will take place to implement any measures if taken forward. As this is a devolved matter, any decisions made as a result of this consultation will apply to English waters only.