

La Francophonie and its ability to serve as a global force for good

Thank you Mr President, and thank you to Assistant-Secretary-General Keita, Secretary-General Mushikwabo and Minister Mnatsakanyan for their informative briefings. The United Kingdom welcomes the strong relationship and cooperation between the UN and the International Organisation of the Francophonie. The equality, complementarity and solidarity between the Francophonie's 88 member states is a powerful force for good in the world.

The Francophonie undoubtedly has a role to play alongside the UN and other organisations in the fields of conflict prevention, mediation and the exercise of good offices, including in settings such as Cameroon. The UK encourages the Francophonie, along with the UN, the African Union, ECCAS and the Commonwealth, to continue to support efforts to end violence and restore peace in Cameroon's northwest and southwest regions.

The Francophonie can also make valuable contributions to the UN's efforts to assist countries emerging from conflict to hold successful elections and to strengthen the role of democratic governance. The Central African Republic, for example, where elections due this December will constitute a critical milestone in the implementation of the peace agreement. It is vital that all of the Central African Republic's partners work together to ensure that those elections are free, fair, inclusive, transparent and credible and conducted in a climate of peace.

Mr President, the United Kingdom, also hopes to see the Francophonie join the UN in encouraging the consolidation of democratic governance and in upholding the importance of human rights. This will be vital in Burundi, where the peaceful transfer of power earlier this year has created a window of opportunity for strengthening governance, accountability and human rights.

But it is also critical in countries where we see signs of rising instability as elections approach. As we made clear in this Council in July, we have been alarmed by violence in Guinea in recent months. And more recently, we have been troubled by the violent clashes breaking out in Côte d'Ivoire. The UN, the Francophonie and all international partners should work with stakeholders in both countries in the coming months to encourage them to uphold the democratic values and human rights that underpin peace, stability and prosperity.

And in Mali, the international community must do all it can to encourage a timely transition to a civilian, democratically elected government, which can meet the needs of the Malian people and strengthen the social contract between citizens and the state.

Mr President, finally, I would like to turn to peacekeeping and the importance of ensuring that all Member States deploy peacekeepers who are fully trained, equipped and prepared to deliver their mandates.

Language skills are essential in this respect. They facilitate engagement with the local population, leading to better situational awareness and help peacekeepers deliver mandated responsibilities, such as protection of civilians, while ensuring their own safety and security. The United Kingdom will ensure that we have the right language capabilities among our peacekeepers deploying to MINUSMA later this year, and we urge all our fellow troop and police contributing countries to do likewise.

Thank you, Mr President.

Russia: G7 Foreign Ministers' statement on Navalny poisoning

We, the G7 foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union, are united in condemning, in the strongest possible terms, the confirmed poisoning of Alexei Navalny.

Germany has briefed G7 partners on the fact that clinical and toxicological findings by German medical experts and a specialized laboratory of the German armed forces have determined that Mr. Navalny is the victim of an attack with a chemical nerve-agent of the "Novichok" group, a substance developed by Russia. Mr. Navalny is in intensive care in a Berlin hospital and remains in a serious condition. Our heartfelt thoughts are with his family and we hope for his full and speedy recovery.

Any use of chemical weapons, anywhere, anytime, by anybody, under any circumstances whatsoever, is unacceptable and contravenes the international norms prohibiting the use of such weapons. We, the G7 foreign ministers, call on Russia to urgently and fully establish transparency on who is responsible for this abhorrent poisoning attack and, bearing in mind Russia's commitments under the Chemical Weapons Convention, to bring the perpetrators to justice.

This attack against opposition leader Navalny is another grave blow against democracy and political plurality in Russia. It constitutes a serious threat to those men and women engaged in defending the political and civil freedoms that Russia herself has committed to guarantee. We call on Russia to fulfill its commitments under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to guarantee these rights, including the right to freedom of expression, to its citizens.

We will continue to monitor closely how Russia responds to international calls for an explanation of the hideous poisoning of Mr. Navalny. We remain strongly committed to our support for democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Russia and to bolster our support to the Russian civil society.

[Called-in decision: land at Highthorn, Widdrington, Northumberland \(ref: 3158266 – 8 September 2020\)](#)

Decision letter and Inspector's Report for a called-in decision for a mineral extraction and auger mining scheme at land at Highthorn, Widdrington, Northumberland, NE61 5EE in accordance with application reference 15/03410/CCMEIA dated 12 October 2015.

[Change of British High Commissioner to Uganda: September 2020](#)

Press release

Ms Kate Airey OBE has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Republic of Uganda in succession to Mr Peter West CMG.



Ms Kate Airey OBE has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Republic of Uganda in succession to Mr Peter West CMG who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service. Ms Airey will take up her appointment during December 2020.

Full name: Kate Airey

Married to: Duncan Low

Children: Two

2017 to present : Windhoek, British High Commissioner
2015 to 2017 : Head of cross-Whitehall Nigeria Unit
2014 to 2015 : Deputy Head, UK Ebola Response, FC0
2014 : Freetown, Deputy High Commissioner
2010 to 2014 : Rome, British Embassy, Prosperity Team Leader
2007 to 2010 : Abuja, British High Commission, Head of Political Section
2005 to 2007 : Africa Energy Adviser, FC0
2002 to 2005 : Shell International, Team Leader, Global Oil Products
2000 to 2001 : Shell UK Ltd, Marketing Manager
1999 to 2000 : Oxfam, Press Officer

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Stronger measures brought in to tackle virus in Bolton

- Ban on mixing outside households in homes and in public outdoor settings will be enforceable by law
- It comes as cases in Bolton reach 120 per 100,000 – the highest in the country

Following discussions with local leaders, the Health Secretary, NHS Test and Trace, the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC), and the Chief Medical Officer for England have agreed to take further action to stop the spread of the virus in Bolton following a significant rise in cases.

The following action will take effect in Bolton immediately:

- all hospitality for food and drink will be restricted to takeaway only
- late-night restriction of operating hours, meaning venues will be required to close between 10pm and 5am

Current guidance on restricting people from socialising outside their household will also be brought into law.

It follows proactive action taken over the weekend by Bolton Council, in consultation with the government and Public Health England (PHE), to implement additional measures on household gatherings and use of public transport.

The North West regulations currently prohibit households from mixing indoors or in gardens. Guidance is already in place on not mixing with those outside your household in public outdoor places and today we are announcing this guidance will be brought in as regulations.

This means all socialising outside of your household will be banned and will be enforced by law. These new regulations will be laid at the earliest opportunity.

Face coverings must be worn on public transport and failure to do so could result in a fine.

The number of positive cases in Bolton have risen to 120 cases per 100,000 – the highest in the country – a change from 98.8 per 100,000 over the weekend. Data shows the rise in cases in Bolton is partly due to socialising by people in their 20s and 30s. Social distancing remains our main line of defence against the virus and it is crucial everyone follows the rules.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Unfortunately, after improving for several weeks, we have seen a very significant and concerning rise in cases in Bolton.

Bolton is now up to 120 cases per 100,000, the highest case rate in the country. Working with the local council, we are taking further local action.

I want to say directly to everyone living in Bolton: I know how anxious this can be and I know the impact that these measures will have but we need to take this crucial step to keep this virus at bay.

PHE, the JBC and NHS Test and Trace are constantly monitoring the levels of infection and other data on prevalence of the virus across the country. As has always been the case, measures are kept under constant review to reduce the spread of the virus and save lives.