

PM call with Chancellor Merkel: 7 July 2020

News story

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to German Chancellor Merkel earlier today.



The Prime Minister spoke to German Chancellor Angela Merkel this afternoon to discuss the global coronavirus response, foreign policy issues and our future relationship with the EU.

The leaders spoke about the importance of international collaboration on coronavirus, including on the work to find a vaccine.

On the future relationship, the Prime Minister underlined the UK's commitment to working hard to find an early agreement out of the intensified talks process. He also noted that the UK equally would be ready to leave the transition period on Australia terms if an agreement could not in the end be reached.

On foreign affairs, the Prime Minister and Chancellor Merkel discussed their concern about possible unilateral annexation of territory in the West Bank by Israel, and pledged to redouble efforts to secure a negotiated solution to the crisis in Libya.

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Ensuring human rights are at the core

of peacekeeping

Thank you Madam President for convening today's important debate. I am also grateful to High Commissioner Bachelet, Special Representative Shearer, and Mr Kitengi for their insightful briefing.

Their insight from the ground reminds us there can be no lasting peace, nor sustainable development, without respect for human rights and the rule of law.

This is an often-repeated refrain in this Council, and a concept we each endorsed in the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations. It is a vision that we all too often fail to realise.

And I want to turn on the situation in Mali as an example. Through this Council, we have mandated MINUSMA to complete three vital human rights functions.

Firstly, to act to prevent serious human rights violations and attacks on civilians, in line with the UN Protection of Civilians policy.

Second, to monitor, investigate and report abuses or violations.

And thirdly, and importantly, to support Malian efforts to protect and promote human rights and, importantly, fight impunity.

This role is fundamental to prevent a further erosion of trust between the states and the people and thereby help to ultimately stabilise the country.

The integrated response at the heart of the mission's adaptation plan, with better coordination between military, police and civilian components, should enable MINUSMA to respond more effectively to reported abuses. It is needed.

Despite our best efforts, reporting from High Commissioner Bachelet's office and the UN Peacekeeping mission, they continue to highlight persistent human rights abuses and violations in Mali and indeed across the Sahel. MINUSMA, like any peace operation around the world, can only ever be part of the solution. It is incumbent on all national governments to protect and promote human rights, investigate allegations of violations and abuses openly and transparently, and hold those responsible to account. When national governments are unwilling to act and the international community can, we should always be prepared to deploy the full range of tools at our disposal and to hold perpetrators to account, including the use of sanctions.

Strong coordination and collaboration between all relevant parts of the United Nations machine, the Malian government should enable them to strengthen their capacity to both protect and promote human rights and, importantly, the rule of law.

Madam President, UN peace operations have an obligation not only to monitor human rights violations and abuses, but also to ensure their support to other

security forces is human rights compliant. The UN's human rights due diligence policy sets this out very clearly.

It is also an incentive to those security forces to deploy and strengthen their own safeguards. I encourage our missions to show more clearly how they are applying it. Every member of a mission's personnel, from the special representatives and force commanders to contingent troops, should understand their role and responsibilities to both protect and promote human rights. We must ensure missions have the specialist capabilities they need to respond effectively to specific human rights challenges in the field.

The devastating impact of conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan, where nearly a quarter of the reported cases involve children, is an unwelcome reminder of the abuses that take place and why we must do better and do more. Reporting tells us that survivors continue to struggle. They continue to struggle to access medical and mental healthcare. Although I am encouraged that the government of South Sudan has acknowledged these concerns and has expressed a willingness to work together with UNMISS to combat sexual and gender based violence.

Let me assure all that the United Kingdom is absolutely committed to supporting survivors, including children born of conflict-related sexual violence, and to holding all perpetrators to account. And we call upon all Council members to support the inclusion of vital human rights experts in our missions, including more gender, child protection and, importantly, women's protection advisors.

To conclude, Madam President, human rights are all about safeguarding the dignity and unleashing the true potential of each and every person around the globe. That is why states that fail to protect and promote human rights are less prosperous, they are less stable and less able to meet the demands of their people and more likely to remain on the agenda of this Council. Human rights intertwine with all aspects of UN peace operations. Therefore, the focus of this Council must be unflinching. We must promote, protect, strengthen and realise human rights wherever we work. It's in our interests, it's in all interests, in the interests of all people.

Thank you, Madam President.

Launching the Decade of Action during COVID-19

Thank you Mr Chair.

As others have said, the landscape has changed significantly since we met in 2019 and it is clear that COVID-19 presents significant challenges to

achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. But our message is that we must not be consumed by the challenges alone, we must use this too as an opportunity to rebuild better.

This is the moment to shape a recovery that delivers cleaner, healthier, more inclusive, and more resilient economies and societies, that puts the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals of the Paris Agreement back within reach as we collectively rise to the challenge of the Decade of Action.

This means leaving no one behind. This means supporting and providing quality education and health services for people living in poverty, women and girls, people with disabilities and marginalised and crisis affected groups. This means ensuring that they are empowered to play a meaningful leadership role and their voices are heard.

To this end, the UK is delighted to be leading the UN Financing for Development work stream on recovering better for sustainability, alongside our partners, the EU, Fiji and Rwanda.

We will also use our G7 presidency, and work with the Italian G20 presidency, to push for a clean and resilient recovery. This approach will also be at the heart, as you say, of our COP26 presidency.

Mr Chair, COVID-19 is very likely to have knocked the SDGs further off-track globally, as we have heard again today, but the story doesn't end there. It's important that we work together to take urgent action.

The SDGs provide a valuable framework to help us build back better in our COVID-19 recovery and by working to achieve the SDGs we will also be better placed to withstand future crises.

COVID-19 has exposed our vulnerabilities, but let it now also galvanise our strengths. We are stronger when we come together.

Thank you.

UN Human Rights Council 44: **Interactive Dialogue with Special** **Rapporteur on Violence Against Women**

Madam President,

The United Kingdom commends the work of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women.

The COVID-19 outbreak is increasing violence against women and girls. However, the pervasive nature of this violence precedes this crisis and, if unchallenged, will persist once passed.

This violence is preventable. The UK is at the forefront of international efforts to eradicate violence against women and girls in all its forms, including: intimate partner violence; female genital mutilation; child, early and forced marriage; and sexual violence, for example through the work led by Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. The UK has also stepped forward to co-lead the Generation Equality Action Coalition on gender-based violence, to galvanise more concerted, coordinated, scaled-up global action and investment in tackling gender-based violence.

The UK works with global partners to support women's leadership, prevent violence and ensure access to life-saving services. We stand with the 124 Member States who answered the Secretary General's call to make prevention and response to gender-based violence a key part of the national response to COVID-19.

Special Rapporteur,

We would appreciate your recommendations for a response and recovery that addresses the longer-term structural causes of violence, and puts women's and girls' safety and rights at its heart.

Thank you.

PCA working with Hive IT to carry out research of Pubs Code users

What is it about?

We are carrying out this research project to understand how to reach and communicate effectively with the full range of tied tenants covered by the Pubs Code. This includes ensuring they are fully aware of their Pubs Code rights and how to exercise them.

The PCA is looking to improve tenant communication and Code awareness. The findings from the research will address this by gathering a full range of facts and opinions from throughout the sector, especially from tied tenants of the pub-owning businesses (POBs).

Hive IT will be talking directly to tied tenants, tenant representative groups and relevant trade bodies. The research will inform an evidence-based plan and recommendations report which will be made public at the end of this

project, with all information anonymised.

Why are we doing it?

As part of the PCA wider awareness and transparency strategy, this project will be crucial to develop a thorough understanding of the breadth of tenants and the barriers to information sharing that currently exist. It is about understanding the most effective ways to interact with users and where there is potential for improved communication.

Timings

The user research project will restart on the 24 August and run until 02 October.

Restarting the research at this time has been informed by some initial engagement, conducted by Hive IT, through a screener survey and contact with stakeholder groups.

How to get involved

There is an initial survey, available [here](#), which will run before the research begins to allow anyone who is interested in helping with our research to get involved, give us a bit of information about themselves and when is the best time to contact them. Hive IT will start some of their research with those who respond to the survey but will also separately reach out to other tied tenants to make sure we have a comprehensive understanding of the tied industry's needs.

Who is Hive IT?

Hive IT is an independent and impartial design and research agency, with extensive experience carrying out discovery projects. At the end of this project they will produce an evidence-based report with recommendations, including detailed information on how to address the needs of all users.

Discovery projects are research projects, designed to understand the problem to be solved, the actions needed to solve it, and the users of any service to address it, what they're trying to achieve and their needs. They do this by talking to those users, and those who interact with them, using structured interviews, surveys and workshops.

You can find out more about them at www.hiveit.co.uk

Project mission statement

“By completing this research, the PCA will understand what's important for the full range of tied tenants in their relationships with their pub company. This will provide an evidence-based plan to provide clarity on what the Pubs Code can do for them and give confidence in how the PCA can promote, ensure

compliance with and enforce the Code.”