

## [UN Human Rights Council 43: interactive dialogue on the Central African Republic](#)

Thank you, Madame Vice President,

The UK remains concerned that armed groups continue to commit the majority of human rights abuses against the Central African Republic population, despite being signatories to the 2019 Peace Agreement. The UK calls on all armed groups to adhere to the Peace Agreement and cease all forms of violence.

We urge the CAR Government to prioritise their efforts to strengthen the judicial system and hold perpetrators of human rights abuses to account in the fight against impunity. Tangible progress is desperately needed to improve prospects for stability and prosperity throughout CAR.

CAR is at a crossroads in its history, with presidential and legislative elections scheduled for December 2020 – the first since the Peace Agreement was signed. The UK urges the CAR Government, the African Union, the UN and the international community to support free, fair, inclusive and peaceful elections in CAR.

Madame Vice President,

We would welcome advice on what the international community can do to ensure the Peace Agreement is protected at this critical juncture.

Thank you.

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## [Joint Call of Finance Ministers of the Five Eyes Nations](#)

News story

The call took place on 18 June 2020.



The Chancellor Rishi Sunak participated in a call with the Finance Ministers of the Five Eyes nations – Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States – to discuss the economic impact of COVID-19.

The Ministers shared updates on policy responses currently in place and discussed strategies to accelerate economic activity, in line with necessary health and safety measures as our economies reopen.

They agreed to remain in regular contact as a group and will continue to work together to support a strong and sustained economic recovery.

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## [Update from the UK Chief Medical Officers on the UK alert level](#)

News story

An update from the CMOs for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on the alert level in the UK.



The Joint Biosecurity Centre has recommended that the COVID-19 alert level should move from Level 4 (A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation; transmission is high or rising exponentially) to Level 3 (A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation).

The CMOs for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have reviewed the evidence and agree with this recommendation to move to Level 3 across the UK.

There has been a steady decrease in cases we have seen in all four nations, and this continues. It does not mean that the pandemic is over. The virus is still in general circulation, and localised outbreaks are likely to occur.

We have made progress against the virus thanks to the efforts of the public and we need the public to continue to follow the guidelines carefully to ensure this progress continues.

Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Chris Whitty

Chief Medical Officer for Northern Ireland, Dr Michael McBride

Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, Dr Gregor Smith

Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Wales, Dr Chris Jones

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## [Competition concerns raised over educational supplies merger](#)

Press release

The CMA has found that YPO's anticipated acquisition of Findel raises competition concerns in the supply of resources to educational institutions in the UK



Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) and Findel Education Limited (Findel) supply a wide range of educational resources such as stationery, furniture and art and science materials to different types of educational institutions across the UK. They are the second and third largest generalist educational distributors, respectively.

After its initial Phase 1 investigation of YPO's anticipated acquisition of Findel, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has found that both YPO and Findel compete closely with each other. If the planned merger goes ahead, YPO would face effective competition from 2 other generalist distributors – RM Plc (which operates across the UK) and ESPO (a large regional player) – and, to a lesser extent, KCS (a smaller regional player). The competition from smaller local generalist distributors, alternative specialist suppliers, high street retailers and online-only distributors, such as Amazon, would only be very limited.

The CMA therefore concluded that the merger may reduce competition both by eliminating Findel's significant competitive constraint on YPO and potentially leading to market conditions in which some generalist distributors focus only on some regions of the UK.

As a result, the merger could leave educational institutions with fewer alternative suppliers and worse terms when purchasing educational supplies.

This merger will be referred for a Phase 2 investigation unless the parties offer acceptable undertakings within 5 working days to address the CMA's competition concerns.

For more information, visit the [Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation / Findel Education merger inquiry](#) web page.

For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or [press@cma.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gov.uk).

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# Toward a Clean, Inclusive, and Resilient Recovery

The United Kingdom and the Philippines, alongside governments around the world, have been facing the unprecedented and truly global challenges of COVID-19. Beyond the tragic and widespread loss of life, COVID-19 has also pushed economies to the brink with increased unemployment and disruption of business operations. Our daily lives have been turned upside-down as many of us learn to work and connect with each other in new and different ways. Indeed, these are trying times.

Governments have stepped up their response. The Philippines is no exception. We have been full of admiration for how the Philippines and Filipinos showed enormous courage, resilience and kindness in difficult times. The UK is immensely grateful to the Philippine government for helping to bring home British people stranded due to the pandemic. Back in the UK, we applaud the care, compassion and professionalism of Filipino healthcare workers in the NHS.

As restrictions are slowly being relaxed and many countries are already entering the period of recovery, the Philippines – like many countries worldwide – is preparing an economic recovery plan. The challenge seems great. But as we reconstruct our world in the new reality, it also enables us to ‘build back better’.

We now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to lay the foundation for a greener recovery: sustainable growth that creates jobs and provides improved social services while addressing equally important concerns on climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity conservation.

United Nations Secretary General António Guterres has already called countries to action. We would highlight several key points:

- The economic case for placing clean energy at the heart of our recovery is clear. Across South East Asia, including the Philippines, renewable energy is increasingly cost-competitive with fossil fuels, and has the potential to meet growing energy demand. Countries which build new coal plants now risk locking in higher costs and higher emissions for decades to come. By instead prioritising renewable energy development, IRENA reported that it would increase jobs in the sector to 42 million globally by 2050, four times more than today.
- Now is the time for high impact local programmes on energy efficiency, biodiversity/forest conservation, deployment and promotion of e-vehicles for public transport, as well as other non-motorized transport. These

are immediate interventions that can be mainstreamed and accelerated. As Lord Nicholas Stern highlighted, these interventions are fast, labour-intensive, and have strong multipliers in terms of growth, employment and climate payoffs.

- We must mobilise greater volumes of global financial flows, both public and private, to support the trillions of investments required for economies to recover. The UK has doubled our International Climate Finance to at least \$11.6 billion between 2021-2025 and we are asking other donor countries to match the scale of our ambition.
- Climate-related risks can and should be integrated in financial systems and decision making. We congratulate the Central Bank for recently issuing the Sustainable Finance Framework to mainstream climate risks in banking operations.

The message is clear: we cannot go back to business as usual. Bold and solid actions are needed to ensure that our decisions today will not lock in polluting and unsustainable investments and economic forms with accompanying stranded assets.

The UK stands firm on its existing commitments and is keen to work hand-in-hand with the Philippines toward a clean, inclusive and resilient recovery. The British Embassy in Manila has revisited all its programmes to ensure we are effectively partnering and supporting the Philippines' needs in COVID-19 recovery, particularly in health, digital economy, fin-tech, green/low carbon solutions, and science and innovation. Our UK-ASEAN-wide programmes aim to contribute to the region too, including transition to low carbon development.

The UK government also sees the Philippines as an important partner in our wider preparations for the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26), which we will host, in partnership with Italy, in Glasgow on 1-12 November 2021. In the run up to COP26, the UK and Italy will actively engage with the Philippine government and wider society towards an ambitious and meaningful outcome at COP26. Together we can build a new global consensus that allows the people to thrive in harmony with the planet.