

[UN Human Rights Council 43: Universal Periodic Review on Egypt](#)

Madam President,

The United Kingdom welcomes Egypt's engagement with the UPR. We look forward to continuing a constructive dialogue on issues of concern.

We welcome Egypt's submission of reports to five UN treaty bodies following the UPR. We also welcome Egypt's support for two of the UK's three recommendations: to implement recommendations presented by UNCAT to ensure access to medical assistance and family visits in Egyptian prisons; and to strengthen protections for, and support to, victims of all forms of human trafficking, regardless of nationality, including through dedicated shelters and community-based support services.

We regret, however, that Egypt could not support our recommendation to release those detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression, including all journalists, activists and human rights defenders, and to unblock news and social media websites. It is concerning that Egypt has labelled this a 'factually incorrect recommendation', particularly as we continue to see restrictions on human rights defenders, including arrests, travel bans, and asset freezes, as well as restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression.

We call on the Egyptian Government to address these concerns and to implement accepted recommendations fully.

Thank you.

[UN Human Rights Council 43: Universal Periodic Review on Iraq](#)

Madam President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the Republic of Iraq's engagement with the UPR process. We welcome Iraq's actions to comply with Security Council Resolution 1325 and to cooperate with all UN international human rights mechanisms. Now Daesh are an active insurgency, it is essential that the Government of Iraq look to support and protect all Iraqi people.

However, we are deeply concerned by ongoing violence and extreme measures taken against protestors. The rights to freedom of expression and peaceful

assembly must be protected, including for journalists. We acknowledge Iraq's acceptance of the UK's recommendation to protect freedom of peaceful assembly, including by properly investigating violence against protesters. We call on the Government to action this immediately.

We commend Iraq's acceptance of the UK's recommendation to reform legislation to ensure justice and support for survivors of sexual violence and the accountability of perpetrators, including specifically making sexual slavery and trafficking for sexual exploitation illegal as a crime separate from kidnapping or detention. However, we regret Iraq is not in a position to accept our third recommendation to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

The UK welcomes Iraq's engagement with the UN and the International Community and we urge the Government to implement accepted recommendations fully.

Thank you.

[Chancellor's first Budget brings £360 million boost for Welsh Government](#)

- £360 million in additional funding from the UK Government to the Welsh Government
- £55 million for a Mid Wales Growth Deal
- Treasury establishing a presence in Wales to ensure Welsh priorities are central to decision making
- Budget brings tax refund for broadcaster S4C

Wales will benefit from a £360 million boost to support its economic growth and level up opportunities, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced.

Delivering his first Budget, Rishi Sunak outlined the additional funding for the Welsh Government, allowing it to deliver on the priorities of people in Wales.

The Chancellor also announced a package of measures to tackle the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on the UK economy, with the Welsh Government to receive additional funding to support public services, vulnerable people and reduce the costs for businesses.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

We made a promise to the people of Wales to build a fairer, more prosperous and more united country – and this Budget will deliver by laying the foundations for a decade of economic growth across

the whole UK.

We are giving the Welsh Government significant extra funding, exploring how to more successfully link the economies of Wales and the West of England, investing in transport and ensuring Wales has enough resources to support public services and businesses in the face of the Covid-19 outbreak.

At the core of this Budget is an ambition to further strengthen the ties that bind us together as a United Kingdom and ensure everyone has the same opportunities in life, whichever part of the country they live in.

Today's announcements for Wales also include:

- £360 million in additional funding for the Welsh Government;
- Support to develop A483 Pant Llanymynech bypass;
- £55 million for the Mid Wales Growth Deal;
- The rollout of gigabit capable broadband to the hardest to reach areas, as well as plans improve 4G connectivity across the UK;
- Accessibility improvements for Newtown railway station in Powys;
- South Wales and Pembrokeshire have successfully bid for £12 million and £4 million respectively to fund full fibre broadband;
- Supporting an independent economic review of the Western Gateway which stretches across Wales and the West of England;
- A commitment from the Treasury to establish a presence in Wales to ensure Welsh priorities are central to economic decision making.

In support of the ambition for one million people to be able to speak Welsh by 2050, the Budget includes a commitment to legislate for Welsh public service broadcaster S4C to be awarded the same VAT status as the BBC and ITN, worth approximately £15 million per year.

The UK Government will explore how to improve improving transport links between North Wales and England by developing the A483 Pant Llanymynech Bypass, supporting an independent economic review of the Western Gateway and providing practical support to help businesses in the Gateway region access international markets. Also included in the Budget is a £55 million investment in Mid Wales, taking investment in growth deals in Wales to almost £800 million.

This year's Budget delivers on the promises made to the British people and lays the foundations for a decade of growth by giving everyone the same opportunity to thrive wherever they live. With commitments to increase the National Living Wage, National Insurance thresholds and the Employment Allowance across the UK, today's Budget means someone working full time on the minimum wage in Wales will be over £5,200 better off than they were ten years ago.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

This Budget shows that the UK Government is keeping its promise to level up the nations and regions of the UK and deliver prosperity for Wales.

From the financial support for city and growth deals, the focus on critical infrastructure projects to the additional spending power for the Welsh Government, this is a Budget with Wales' economy at its centre.

The UK Government is also supporting Welsh culture with £15m a year in VAT relief for S4C, boosting the creative economy in Wales.

We are also supporting the Welsh Government in the exceptional challenges it currently faces, providing significant extra funding to help tackle Coronavirus and for flood relief to affected communities.

ENDS

[Fishing Minister visits Peterhead](#)

Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis experienced first-hand the outstanding work undertaken at the UK's largest fishing port during a two-day fact-finding trip to Peterhead.

The Ministerial visit started yesterday (Thursday, 11 March) with a tour of the [Macduff Shellfish](#) factory, where Director of Sustainability & Public Affairs, Andrew Brown, provided an overview of how wild scallops, langoustines, crabs and whelks are handled at Europe's largest shellfish processing facility.

Minister Prentis then spoke to traders while touring Peterhead's buzzing fish market, and visited the UK's largest white fish and pelagic fishing port, accompanied by Peter Duncan, Business Development Manager for [Peterhead Port Authority](#) and [David Duguid](#), Scottish Conservative MP for Banff and Buchan.

The visit provided the opportunity for a wide-ranging discussion with key stakeholders, including Elspeth MacDonald, Chief Executive of the [Scottish Fishermen's Federation \(SFF\)](#) and J Johnston, and Jimmy Buchan from the [Scottish Seafood Association \(SSA\)](#).

Minister Prentis heard more about the sector's top priorities, and explored how the Scottish fishing and seafood industries can take every advantage of

the opportunities available as we become an independent coastal state.

Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis, said:

As the new Fisheries Minister, I am absolutely delighted that I was able to visit Peterhead and meet organisations such as the SFF and SSA to hear about the important contribution of the seafood sector to this vibrant community, and to the UK economy at large.

Peterhead is at the very heart of the Scottish seafood and fishing industry – it's one of the most versatile ports in the UK and one that is very ambitious about its future. As we become an independent coastal state, it is my priority to ensure that our fishing industry is set to thrive in the years to come.

Elsbeth Macdonald, Chief Executive at the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, said:

Hearing the Minister reiterate the UK Government's position about securing the Sea of Opportunity outside of the Common Fisheries Policy was very welcome.

There is much to do over the coming months to deliver this, and the SFF is committed to working closely with both the UK and Scottish Governments to achieve this for the benefit of our businesses and communities.

The visit offered the opportunity for Minister Prentis to reiterate the UK Government's strong commitment to the fishing industry in Scotland and across the whole of the UK.

The UK Government has already confirmed that funding supported by the European Maritime Fisheries Fund will be guaranteed. In addition, it has allocated an additional £37.2 million to support the industry as we transition out of the EU and [committed to funding for four domestic grant schemes](#) across the UK from 2021 onwards.

Scotland is also one of the greatest beneficiaries of the [Seafood Innovation Fund](#). In the first round of applications, over 50% of the fund were awarded to aquaculture R&D projects in the nation, a total investment of nearly £1.8 million. The second round is currently open for applications.

Leaving the EU means that Scotland, and the other Devolved Administrations, will see a significant increase in the decision-making powers in fisheries, and for protecting the marine environment. This ambition is enshrined in the Fisheries Bill, along with the opportunity to design our own domestic fishing

policy, one that is catered to support our coastal communities best.

The visit coincides with the launch of a new seafood campaign led by Defra and Seafish. [“Sea for Yourself”](#) aims to showcase the varieties of seafood caught in UK waters, and provides consumers suggestions to best enjoy less known, but equally tasty and versatile seafood species. The campaign is one of the latest government initiative to support the fishing industry in Britain as we leave the Common Fisheries Policy and become an independent coastal state.

Minister Prentis concluded her visit with a tour of Mill of Crimond farm in Fraserburgh, and a meeting with representatives of NFU Scotland, including President Andrew McCornick, and David Duguid MP. The group discussed the opportunities and challenges ahead for the industry.

[Called-in decision: land at Hatchfield Farm, Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk \(ref: 2222871 – 12 March 2020\)](#)

Decision letter and Inspector’s Report for a called-in decision for up to 400 dwellings plus associated open space (including allotments and areas of habitat enhancement) foul and surface water infrastructure, two accesses onto the A142, internal footpaths, cycle routes and estate roads.