

UN Human Rights Council 43: UK statement for the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism

Thank you, Madam President.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her report, and reaffirm our support for her mandate. All activity to combat terrorism must respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, while protecting the security of our citizens through effective and proportionate legislation.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur on the importance of engaging with the broader conditions conducive to violent extremism and terrorism. Ensuring trust in governments, and addressing State accountability, justice and good governance, is a vital part of a successful strategy in this field.

We also agree on the importance of engaging civil society and local communities when forming and delivering policy. As she says in her report, civil society, and the voice they provide for the marginalised and vulnerable, can foster greater transparency and accountability in CT work. In the UK we run engagement events with local partners, civil society and community members, inviting the public to learn about the Prevent programme and offer their views. This helps to focus our interventions towards those most at risk of radicalisation.

With this point in mind, can the Special Rapporteur provide any further examples of where civil society has helped to positively shape policy on preventing violent extremism?

Thank you.

DASA seeks innovative ideas to mitigate radar risk of windfarms

New technology to ensure future windfarms will not affect the UK's Air Defence radar system will be developed as part of a £2m innovation

competition launched today – a move which could pave the way for a significant boost to the UK's renewable energy growth.

Proposals for innovative solutions and advances in technology that alleviates the impact off-shore wind turbines could have on military and civilian radar systems are being sought by the MOD's innovation hub, the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA).

DASA is leading the work on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Royal Air Force, and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl).

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Defence technologies have a huge amount to offer the demands of the 21st century UK – including addressing the challenge of climate change.

We have an incredible skills base in the UK and this initiative will harness the power of wind turbines whilst ensuring our air defence standards.

Wg Cdr Helena Ramsden, Air Capability Development, RAF Air Command, said:

We are investing in cutting-edge innovation and harnessing the best technology from the brightest minds in the country.

This competition demonstrates our commitment to keeping the skies above the UK safe from aerial threats whilst accelerating crucial work to allow the nation to do more to combat climate change.

Adam Moore, DASA delivery manager, said:

Crucial innovation like this is vital if we are to meet our renewable energy targets.

This competition will not only help us meet our green energy needs but it will help boost UK prosperity, entrepreneurs and innovators by investing in their game-changing technology.

DASA is proud to be working closely with BEIS, the RAF and Dstl to lead this important work which could transform the UK's approach to offshore wind power generation.

This builds on the Offshore Wind Sector Deal, published by the Government in March 2019.

In the Deal the government committed to work with the sector and wider stakeholders, setting out that we could see up to 30GW of offshore wind by 2030 (expected to represent around 30% of the UK's electricity need), with a manifesto commitment to increase this to 40GW by 2030.

The deal also set out industry targets of supporting 27,000 jobs and £2.4bn per annum of exports by 2030.

Multiple proposals are expected to be funded with up to £2m available in total from the BEIS Energy Innovation Programme.

Full details and scope of the [Windfarm Mitigation for UK Air Defence competition can be found by clicking here](#).

Notes to Editors

Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA)

[DASA – the Ministry of Defence's innovation hub – finds and funds exploitable technology](#) to give Her Majesty's Armed Forces and UK security a strategic advantage over adversaries while supporting the nation's prosperity. DASA works with scientists from Dstl, academia, and industry to rapidly develop these new technologies.

BEIS Energy Innovation Programme

The funding forms part of the [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's £505 million Energy Innovation Programme](#), which is dedicated to harnessing and rolling out cutting edge technology to fight climate change.

[£1 million for innovative student mental health projects](#)

Student groups most at risk of poor mental health will benefit from more targeted support through a £1million government funding boost, it has been announced on University Mental Health Day (5 March).

The funding will create new projects to support groups of students research suggests could be more 'at risk' of developing a mental health condition, such as black or ethnic minority students, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, LGBT+ students or those with a disability.

The money, provided by the Department for Health and Social Care, will go to the universities regulator the Office for Students (OfS), who is inviting bidders to submit proposals that will target and help students who might be at greater risk of mental ill health or who may face barriers to getting support.

In a 2019 survey, 17% of students reported having a mental health condition (up from 12% in 2016) and one in four students say they often or always feel lonely, according to a report by HEPI.

Universities Minister Michelle Donelan said:

Going to university can be a really challenging time, especially if you face added pressures or if you are balancing studies alongside other commitments like carers and mature students.

It is vital no student is put at risk by not getting the help they need. Universities must step up to this challenge, and this funding will help them and the sector by looking at ways support can be better targeted and improved.

OfS data has highlighted how outcomes for some student groups are more likely to be impacted by mental health problems. For example, the degree attainment gap between black and white students with a reported mental health condition is 26.8 percentage points.

Successful projects will also target groups of students who might face barriers in accessing support, like carers, part-time and international students and those on placements as part of their course.

The projects will also be judged on how they use innovative and technological approaches to addressing mental health issues, in line with the new NHS drive for improvement in digital support.

Chris Millward, Director for Fair Access and Participation at the OfS, said:

All students deserve the opportunity to thrive at university and college, but for too many mental ill-health remains a significant barrier. We know that there are many factors which can impact the wellbeing of students and situations where students may be or feel more vulnerable. Through this funding we want to support innovative and strategic solutions that can help ensure that all students, regardless of their background or how they study, get the support they need.

By working together with partners including the NHS and charities, universities and colleges have the power to address the complex issues associated with student mental ill-health. We will be sharing the effective practice that comes from this funding and driving improved mental health support for all students.

The Government also has an ambitious programme supporting good mental health

in schools and colleges, implementing a range of measures outlined in the 2018 Green Paper. This includes introducing new Mental Health Support Teams, training for mental health leads in schools and colleges, and the £9.3 million Link Programme to ensure more joined up care with specialist NHS services.

This is alongside all children in schools being taught how to look after their mental wellbeing through compulsory relationships and health education, before university.

[Landmark Immigration Bill to end free movement introduced to Parliament](#)

The Immigration Bill will be introduced to the House of Commons today (Thursday 5 March) ending the European Union's rules on free movement.

It represents an important milestone in paving the way for the new UK points-based immigration system. It will be introduced by the Minister for Future Borders and Immigration, Kevin Foster, and marks an historic moment in the country's history, following the UK's departure from the EU on 31 January 2020.

Minister for Future Borders and Immigration Kevin Foster said:

Today we've taken the momentous first step to end free movement and take back control of our borders, delivering on the people's priorities.

Our firmer and fairer points-based immigration system will attract the brightest and best from around the globe, prioritising those who come to Britain based on the skills they have to offer, not on the passport they hold.

The bill will begin its passage in the House of Commons. Once passed, it will give the UK full control over who comes to the country. By ending free movement, and bringing EU citizens under UK immigration controls, the bill will enable the newly announced UK points-based system to operate from 1 January 2021. This will deliver a firmer and fairer immigration system for the whole of the UK.

Details of the new points-based immigration system were [announced by the Home Secretary](#) in February, giving top priority to those with the highest skills and the greatest talents, including scientists, engineers and academics. Overall levels of migration will be reduced, and the government will end a

reliance on low-paid labour from abroad.

Those who want to come to the UK and make a contribution to our economy and society will benefit from a more flexible, streamlined, and simplified system. The operation of the UK border will be revolutionised, and security tightened to stop serious criminals entering the country.

Further information on the points-based system will be detailed in the Immigration Rules published later in the year.

The bill will further protect the long-held rights of Irish citizens, a unique status in place since the 1920s. It makes it clear Irish citizens will continue to freely enter and reside in the UK without requiring permission to do so after free movement ends.

The Immigration Bill also allows the government to make changes to social security arrangements. This will help to ensure people making the UK their home after 1 January 2021 pay into the tax system for a reasonable period of time before they can access the benefit system.

EU citizens and other non-visa nationals will not require a visa to enter the UK when visiting the UK for up to 6 months. However, the use of EEA national identity cards will be phased out for travel to the UK, with the Home Office setting out plans in due course.

The government has committed to guaranteeing the rights of EEA citizens and their family members who are resident in the UK by the end of the transition period (31 December 2020).

Those EU citizens resident in the UK by this time can still apply to settle in the UK through the EU Settlement Scheme until June 2021.

Save the Children UK let down complainants and public over handling of allegations of workplace harassment

The Charity Commission has criticised failures in [Save the Children UK's](#) response to allegations of workplace harassment made by staff members against the charity's former chief executive.

In a report published today, the Commission (the regulator for charities in England and Wales) finds that there were weaknesses in the charity's workplace culture, and that Save the Children UK let down the complainants, its staff and the wider public. The charity's handling of the complaints was so poor in certain respects that it amounted to mismanagement. These

allegations, and the way in which the charity responded, had a corrosive impact on its internal culture.

The report finds a wide range of failings

- the charity failed to consistently follow its own processes when staff members made allegations of inappropriate conduct against the charity's CEO in 2012 and 2015
- the decision to deal with those complaints informally, rather than to investigate them fully, ran counter to the charity's own disciplinary procedures
- the whole trustee body was not made aware of important issues as early as it should have been: the trustee body was not informed of allegations made against the charity's CEO in 2012, and did not receive a copy of the full findings of an external report on corporate culture in 2015

The Commission began investigating [The Save the Children Fund](#) (Save the Children UK) in 2018, when the charity came under public scrutiny over its record on staff culture and morale and its handling of complaints against two former senior staff members, including the former CEO. At that time, the regulator was concerned about the "accuracy and integrity" of statements the charity made to media and complainants about its past handling of incidents.

Today's report acknowledges the pressure Save the Children UK was under, but is also critical of the charity's public statements at the time, one of which was "not wholly accurate", and says the charity's overall approach was "unduly defensive", falling short of the high standards expected of charities.

The report is also critical of the charity's failure to identify the chief executive as the subject of harassment complaints when it made a serious incident report to the regulator in 2015. The Commission says this amounted to the omission of "material facts", and to mismanagement.

"Serious weaknesses in workplace culture"

The charity itself instigated two separate reviews into culture and morale; in 2015, it instructed the Lewis Silkin law firm to, among other things, conduct an investigation into its workplace culture. That report stressed that there were significant employee engagement issues at the charity and noted that the "biggest behavioural cues" for staff come from what their leaders are seen to role model and to tolerate.

That report called on the charity's trustees and senior executives to ensure the charity's mission and values were consistently reflected in the behaviour of senior people, as internal culture and behaviours "directly affects public trust and confidence in the charity".

Regulator acknowledges elements of good practice

The inquiry acknowledges some aspects of good practice in the way the charity dealt with complaints. It finds the charity recognised the seriousness of the

complaints made and says there is no evidence of deliberate attempts to brush complaints under the carpet; nor did the inquiry find evidence of inappropriate involvement in the handling of complaints by the charity's then Chair. The regulator says the charity did the right thing in instigating two separate reviews of workplace culture – the Lewis Silkin review in 2015 and the Shale Review in 2018.

The Commission also recognises that the charity has since taken steps to improve the charity's workplace culture and respond to the external reviews' findings of significant problems around employee engagement.

Lessons for other charities to learn

The regulator expects charities to manage employment matters themselves and it hopes the exceptional circumstances that prompted it to investigate Save the Children UK will not be repeated in other charities.

However, the inquiry notes that this case raises important lessons for all charities, notably on the crucial role of the behaviour of senior leaders in creating appropriate workplace cultures that meet wider expectations of charity.

Helen Stephenson, Chief Executive of the Charity Commission, says:

Charities should be distinct from other types of organisations in their attitude and behaviour, in their motivations and methods. The public rightly expect that; so do the majority of people working in charities, who deserve a workplace culture that is healthy, supportive, and safe.

Creating that culture is not just about putting the right systems and processes in place; it also requires leaders who model the highest standards of behaviour and conduct, and who are held to account properly and consistently when they fall short.

This responsibility is especially pronounced in large, household name charities: their leaders are powerful, and highly respected. The impact of failures in leadership in such charities can also have implications for public trust and confidence beyond the charity itself. So they must use that power responsibly, and in a way that reflects legitimate expectations of charity.

Save the Children UK let complainants and the public down. It must work hard now to rebuild its reputation.

Read the [full report, setting out all the detail of the inquiry's findings and conclusions](#).

Summary timeline – full details in inquiry report

2012

- Staff member raises complaint with HR about the behaviour of the then CEO towards her. In agreement with complainant, charity deals with matter informally – counter to its own disciplinary procedures. No investigation into the complaints takes place and therefore the facts are never established. Complainant receives handwritten apology from then CEO and is assured that the matter is recorded on his HR file.
- Complainant is satisfied on this basis – her main concern is for the inappropriate behaviour to stop.

March 2015

- Following staff focus group sessions, two staff members make complaints about the conduct of the then CEO in past years. One states that the then CEO's behaviour during a recent trip abroad made her uncomfortable, and prompted her to distance herself from him.
- The charity seeks external legal advice, but it appears the advice was not properly understood or actioned or fully shared with the trustees.
- The complaints are, again, dealt with informally: a meeting takes place between the complainants, the then CEO, the Vice-Chair of the charity and an HR representative; the former CEO apologises about any distress his behaviour has caused.
- No further action is taken with regard to the then CEO.

August 2015

- The 2012 complainant becomes aware of the 2015 complaints and is upset to know that similar behaviour was alleged to have been repeated.
- She raises a grievance about the way her complaint had been dealt with.
- The charity trustees commission an external review to examine how it handled the complaints made in both 2012 and 2015. The Commission considers that the trustees acted properly in commissioning this review. It is around this time the full Board of Trustees is informed that complaints were against the CEO.
- The review finds various faults with the way the charity dealt with the complaints in both 2012 and 2015.
- Following the resignation of the CEO and the conduct of the Lewis Silkin review the 2015 complainant was by November 2015 satisfied that her grievance had been dealt with; however, the charity interpreted this as her grievance having been 'withdrawn', which implies retracted. That misunderstanding causes the 2012 complainant further frustration and concern when it is repeated in the press in 2018.
- Serious concerns are raised about a separate senior leader at the charity, the Director of Policy and Advocacy. The charity recognises the alleged behaviour as a disciplinary matter and instigates formal investigation against the individual.

September 2015

- A disciplinary hearing for the Director of Policy and Advocacy is scheduled for September; however he resigns before a hearing can take place.
- The charity makes a serious incident report to the Commission, and later follows that up with a further update, which notes that allegations were made against another senior staff member; however the report does not note that the individual referred to in the update was the charity's CEO. The Commission did not learn it was the CEO until it was suggested in media coverage in November 2015. Nor were the full trustee board initially notified of this crucial point – the Commission considers this amounts to mismanagement. The full board of Save the Children UK does not appear to have been notified until around the time that the Lewis Silkin review was commissioned in August 2015.

December 2015

- The former CEO moves on to another organisation; the then Chair receives a request for a reference. He provides a personal verbal reference over the phone (it is not exactly clear when this took place). While the charity has since taken steps to prevent the provision of personal verbal references, the inquiry notes that even if Save the Children UK had been formally approached for a reference, it would have been limited in what it could tell any third-party employer. There had been no formal disciplinary procedures and no formal action had been taken

2018

- In the wake of wider scrutiny of charities, a newspaper article is published revealing concerns about the former CEO's conduct at Save the Children UK. The charity faces significant media interest, and considers that among the allegations being put to its press office are those that are inaccurate and misleading. The charity considers it needs to address these inaccuracies to protect complainants and the charity's reputation.
- However, the content of the statements prompts the Commission to write to the charity's trustees to remind them that "Public and media lines must not conflict with findings of any of your internal investigations or reports.". The Commission's inquiry later finds that aspects of a statement issued on 20 February 2018 were not wholly correct. In particular, the statement refers to the charity having carried out "investigations", instead they oversaw the handling of the complaints which resulted in an informal resolution.
- The Commission's inquiry opens in April 2018.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The matters under investigation related exclusively to issues around staff conduct towards other staff members and workplace culture; none of the Commission's findings call into question the Save the Children UK's

charitable work.

2. As part of its inquiry, the Commission conducted formal interviews with around 40 individuals, and examined over 15,000 documents relating to the charity's processes and conduct of internal staffing investigations.