

# UK is taking forward future trade and investment relationship with Japan

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab travels to Tokyo on Saturday 8 February to meet Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi to discuss how the UK and Japan can work more closely as partners on the world stage now that the UK has left the EU.

In recent years, this partnership has gone from strength-to-strength thanks to our mutual belief in collective security, respect for the rules-based international system and shared economic and strategic aims.

The UK and Japan also work closely together to tackle shared threats, whether North Korea's nuclear programme, challenges to maritime security in the Indo-Pacific or climate change, the defining threat of our era.

Our trade relationship is flourishing, with more than £30bn of goods and services passing between our two countries last year and UK and Japanese companies working together to develop cutting-edge solutions to global challenges.

Ahead of the visit, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Japan is a great friend and our closest security partner in Asia. Now we've left the EU we can take full advantage of the opportunities open to us – in trade, investment, technological innovation and security cooperation.

Our countries also share common values, from free markets and human rights to the international rule of law, which will help take our friendship from strength to strength.

UK-Japan cooperation also covers climate change, with the UK set to host COP26, in November. The Foreign Secretary will discuss climate issues in his meeting with Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi.

He will also meet representatives from Japanese trading house Itochu and meet the Paralympics GB women's basketball team who are in Japan in the lead up to the Tokyo games.

The Foreign Secretary has also been to Australia and will travel on to Singapore and Malaysia on his trip to promote the UK as a dynamic, forward-looking nation and global force for good.

## Further information

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# Thousands of trees to be planted in England's towns and cities

Thirteen projects in urban communities across England have been awarded a share of the £10m in the first round of the [Urban Tree Challenge Fund](#).

Across the country over 22,000 large trees and 28,000 small trees will be planted in urban areas, from Thanet to Middlesbrough, and Merseyside to Bristol. These will help areas improve health and wellbeing, as well as playing a crucial role in the fight against climate change, supporting the UK's journey to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The Government is committed to plant 30,000 hectares of trees a year across the UK by 2025, and the fund is helping increase canopy cover in and around our towns and cities where they bring a wide range of benefits.

Launched in May 2019, the £10 million scheme will see 130,000 trees planted across England's towns and cities by 2021.

### **Environment Secretary Theresa Villiers said:**

Trees are vital in the fight against climate change, to tackle air pollution and help us achieve our net-zero target by 2050. But for local communities they are so much more. They allow green spaces to come together, help both physical and mental wellbeing, and connect children and young people with nature.

Our manifesto sets our ambition to have every new street lined with trees, and the Urban Tree Challenge Fund complements this ambition, benefiting thousands of people for years to come.

### **Sir Harry Studholme, Chair of the Forestry Commission, said:**

It is such great news that the first year of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund has been so successful and able to reach so many places.

The fund focuses on areas of high deprivation and low tree canopy cover where every tree planted has the change to provide the greatest impact.

Not only do trees in urban areas help to improve wellbeing but they

also offer benefits in many other ways like helping tackle climate change and mitigating flood risks. I look forward to seeing the second year of the fund re-opening for smaller scale planting later this year.

Successful projects in the first round include:

- The Trees for Cities project which will receive support for over 9,000 trees to be distributed across the country.
- Over 8,000 trees will be planted by Slough Borough Council, almost 7,000 large trees will go to London Street Trees and 6,000 trees to The Mersey Forest.

Examples of what these projects are looking to achieve include:

- The Urban Trees in The Mersey Forest project focuses on recreation and health – improving the quality of access routes, encouraging active travel and recreation, and improving wellbeing and mental health through increased physical activity and greener neighbourhoods.
- Funding for Slough Borough Council's 'TEC' Urban Forest project will support the Council's wider plans to tackle air pollution, reduce particulate matter levels and increase flood protection. Trees will be planted in urban areas that directly benefit local air quality and protect the town from floods.

Thanet has one of the lowest tree canopies – 4.4 per cent – in the country and one of the highest levels of deprivation so I have always seen the planting of trees in the area a priority of mine. The response from our community in Thanet has been incredible and has shown it is an important issue for everybody.

Thanks to the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, the Isle of Thanet Trees and Woods Initiative is going to be the catalyst for positive change in Thanet for future generations, increasing biodiversity, increasing tree canopy coverage and providing all the health benefits that trees provide.

The Urban Tree Challenge Fund is made up of two parts. In year one, the fund was open for block bids from local authorities or larger organisations, and bidding closed on 31 August 2019. In year two, the fund will reopen for applications from individual tree planters, commencing in spring 2020.

Ahead of this, applicants can currently [submit an Expression of Interest](#) to the Forestry Commission to state their interest and receive the latest up-to-date information on the fund before the opening of the year two application window.

The grants are administered by the Forestry Commission, and successful applicants are match-funding the money they receive.

Grants will fund the planting of trees and the first three years of their care to ensure they can flourish into the future.

Since 2010 government has planted over 15 million trees, and we have a clear commitment through our 25 Year Environment Plan to increase woodland cover further. Our recently introduced Environment Bill gives communities a greater say in the management of street trees.

The successful applicants were:

- Middlesbrough 10,000 trees
- Tree-ing Urban Northumberland
- Slough Borough Council – TEC Urban Forest
- London Street Trees
- Thanet Community Forest School CIO
- Space for Trees (Durham)
- Urban Trees in The Mersey Forest
- Green Street Community Planting (Bristol and North Somerset)
- Trees for Cities (London and across England)
- City of Trees (Greater Manchester)
- Luton Borough Council
- Plymouth City Council
- Cornwall Council

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## [New UK aid to help stop the spread of coronavirus around the world](#)

- UK aid to the World Health Organisation (WHO) will help prevent the spread of the virus in developing countries, by supporting them to rapidly identify and care for patients with symptoms.
- Additional experts funded by UK aid will be deployed to the WHO to help coordinate the international response.
- The new support announced today demonstrates how UK aid is making the world a safer place, tackling disease outbreaks that do not respect borders.

The International Development Secretary Alok Sharma has today pledged new support to the WHO to help respond to the global coronavirus outbreak.

A number of developing countries across Asia and Africa have identified potential cases, but many lack the tools, expertise and infrastructure to

diagnose and treat patients themselves. Proper detection and isolation of patients is essential to prevent the spread of the disease globally, and leaving countries with fragile health systems unable to respond risks further outbreaks across the world.

£5 million of UK aid will support the WHO's Flash Appeal to stop the spread of the disease by supporting the developing countries most at risk of coronavirus to quickly identify cases and care for patients.

This will include training rapid response teams and medical staff to identify and respond to symptoms, raising awareness in developing countries of how to avoid coronavirus and predicting the spread of the virus to better target future support.

On top of the UK's support for the Flash Appeal, additional experts funded by UK aid are expected to be deployed to the WHO. The experts will help coordinate the international response to ensure developing countries are better prepared and can respond effectively to potential cases.

The UK is well prepared for these types of outbreaks and was one of the first countries in the world to develop a laboratory test for the new virus.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

Diseases are global threats and to save lives around the world we need a fully coordinated international response.

By supporting developing countries with fragile health systems to properly respond to suspected cases of coronavirus, UK aid can help prevent the spread of the outbreak.

New UK aid support announced today follows £40 million invested into vaccine and virus research earlier this week by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC). The new DHSC funding, some of which is also UK aid, will support work on developing new vaccines for epidemics, including three new programmes to develop vaccines against the novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV.

## **Notes to editors**

- UK aid will support the WHO's Emergency Flash Appeal to respond to coronavirus. The WHO has initially asked donors worldwide for a total of \$61.5 million (approximately £47 million) of new funding, of which the UK will contribute £5 million.
- In addition, UK aid will fund the deployment of experts to the WHO's Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.

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## Adapting tools to combat terrorist threats

Well, thank you, Mr President, and let me, as always, thank our briefers today, Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Assistant Secretary-General Coninx, and Ms Freij for their presentations. And may I also thank the monitoring team for their very strong contribution to this report.

Mr President, let me say that we agree with the assessment set out in the Secretary-General's report. Al-Qaeda remains a destabilising influence. And while Daesh has lost territory, it remains a considerable threat, both militarily and politically. With the appointment of Baghdadi's successor and the emergence of strong affiliates and supporters from West Africa to Southeast Asia, their core narrative or brand continues. The United Kingdom will continue to work with Coalition partners to bring an end to Daesh once and for all.

The United Kingdom has been clear that individuals who have fought for or supported Daesh must face justice and accountability in the most appropriate jurisdiction, which is often in the region where crimes took place. We continue to pursue all available avenues with international partners and reaffirm the need to implement Security Council Resolution 2396. And in this regard, we welcome the unanimous renewal of UNITAD's mandate in September and very much support its work on supporting victims and collecting critical evidence to hold Daesh accountable for its horrific crimes.

On the subject of repatriations, the United Kingdom works with all concerned to facilitate the return of unaccompanied or orphaned children where feasible. Each case is considered on an individual basis, subject to national security concerns.

Mr President, as we adapt our tools, so do the terrorists. We were therefore pleased that recent resolutions reflect new methods of terrorist financing and links of criminality and welcomed the increased focus on the protection of principled humanitarian action. We encourage CTED and UNOCT to continue developing their work on this aspect.

Mr President, the Secretary-General's report illustrates the complex and multiple roles of women and the need to ensure gendered analysis and responses. And we heard today the brave testimony of Ms Freij and the invaluable contributions of women on the front lines. Ms Freij reminded us of the importance of ensuring that there is not only a security response to terrorism, there is a need also to build societies' resilience, including through civil society. It's important to win over hearts and minds, and a failure risks reversion to terrorism in the future. And I know that Under-Secretary-General Varonkov supports very strongly the role of civil society in tackling terrorism.

Mr President, following the recent CTED visit to Beijing, we commend CTED for completing assessment visits now to all permanent members of this Council, as well, of course, to many of its current and previous, and I dare I say it, future members. We welcome CTED's constructive engagement in facilitating these visits and that of those members of this United Nations. The United Kingdom, for its part, invited a second follow-up seated visit in October last year, covering a robust and comprehensive agenda. It's important that these visits are not simply for show, but produce detailed reports and recommendations which can aid our counter-terrorism approaches.

The United Kingdom has sadly faced two attacks in recent months from Daesh-inspired terrorism. And I want to pay tribute today to members of the public and police in the United Kingdom who confronted those terrorists and prevented greater harm. The UK would ensure we take measures to tackle all forms of terrorism, including from the extreme right wing. And as we continue to review our own report from CTED and with CTED, we expect that all visited states will work towards finalisation of their report.

Mr President, the Secretary-General's report rightly highlights the importance of respect for human rights in effective counter-terrorism policies. Indeed, the Council has repeatedly stressed the importance of human rights in counter-terrorism and determined early on through policy guidance in 2006 that human rights is an important component of CTED's work. We also commend UN entities for their many initiatives, ensuring that measures to prevent violent extremism integrate human rights and gender as cross-cutting issues. We continue, in that context, to have strong concerns regarding the human rights situation in Xinjiang, including: the extrajudicial detention of over a million Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in so-called political re-education camps; systematic restrictions on Uyghur culture and the practice of Islam; and extensive and invasive surveillance targeting minorities, much of which has been revealed in the Chinese government's own papers. We recognise, of course, that China may have terrorism concerns, but it is our view that its actions are disproportionate and indiscriminate, and moreover, that they will be counter-productive in the long term because they risk exacerbating ethnic tensions and creating conditions that lead to radicalisation and terrorism. I note that Under-Secretary-General Voronkov visited China and went to Xinjiang, but he did not have access to the camps, and that such a visit was not on CTED's agenda. We therefore encourage China to agree an early date for a visit by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Bachelet and to guarantee her free and unfettered access to Xinjiang.

I would just say, Mr President, that I was a little surprised to hear my distinguished Chinese colleague say that the Security Council was not an appropriate forum for discussion of Xinjiang. At the Security Council meeting on 25th of September 2019 under the Russian presidency, State Councillor Wang Yi proactively raised the situation in Xinjiang and described China's actions both as, I quote, preventive counter-terrorism, and, I quote again, implementing the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. He spoke third that day after Kuwait and Belgium, neither of whose representatives had raised Xinjiang in their interventions. So it was a choice of China to place the issue on our table here.

Mr President, I do not wish to revisit yesterday's meeting. That will take us far too long. But I would just say to the distinguished Russian representative that tackling terrorism cannot ever be and is not an excuse or a reason for widespread attacks on civilians or for breaching international law.

Mr President, in conclusion, the terrorist threat is constantly evolving and we must be ready to adapt our tools. However, one constant remains that human rights and counter-terrorism are mutually reinforcing and not contradictory goals. This Council has developed a robust and balanced counter-terrorism framework through its resolutions. We should continue our collective efforts to ensure that the measures we take do not contribute to exacerbating future challenges.

Thank you, Mr President.

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## **Official Development Assistance Programme 2020-2021: Expressions of Interest**

We invite interested organisations to send in their Expression of Interest to become project implementers for our 2020-2021 Official Development Assistance (ODA) bilateral programme, as per our expected outcomes.

Deadline: Sunday 8 March 2020, midnight.

### **What is the ODA bilateral programme?**

The ODA Bilateral Programme is the main channel through which the British Embassy finances projects in Venezuela. These should contribute towards achieving results within strategic objectives and expected outcomes identified by the Embassy, which benefit Venezuela.

During the 2019-2020 financial year (FY), the Embassy supported various projects on areas such as human rights and democracy, economic reform, sustainable development and energy.

### **What are the Embassy's expected cooperation objectives for FY 2020-2021?**

1. Capacity building of local media workers and outlets, with a particular focus on regional and community-based media, to operate in a restrictive and economically complex environment (e.g. sustainable business models). Please, refer to key point nine (9) below.



2. Promoting gender equality and female empowerment; and/or protecting girls' rights by increasing access to education.
3. Capacity building of civil society organisations to carry out independent and impartial data and evidence collection on human rights abuses, following International Law standards.
4. Identifying Modern Slavery dynamics in Venezuela (in line with the UK's Modern Slavery International Strategy) affecting forced migrants, workers in mining industry and other vulnerable groups.
5. Promoting democratic values and increasing civil society capacity to champion free and fair elections, good governance, transparency and/or rule of law.
6. Strengthening the capacity of economic actors (such as the private sector, civil society and research institutions) to contribute to economic stability, including through improved data access and management and/or promoting economic diversification.
7. Mapping out options to advance the energy transition, clean growth and low-carbon development in Venezuela.
8. Promoting public debate and cross-society action to tackle climate change, including through nature-based solutions, protecting biodiversity and stronger adaptation and resilience.

## **Key points to consider before submitting your Expression of Interest**

1. Projects are funded for no more than ten (10) months. Activities should be carried out within the UK financial year (1 April 2020-31 March 2021). Please plan to start activities as of mid-May.
2. Payments are made in arrears (reimbursements). This means that the Embassy is not allowed to pay up-front for project activities which have not taken place.
3. Overhead/administration costs should not exceed 10% of the overall project budget.
4. 85% of the funds must be implemented by mid-December 2020.

5. Make sure the proposed project purpose (in the format) is well defined and specific, and is aimed at achieving at least one of the listed cooperation outcomes.
6. Co-financing from other institutions is welcomed. Please include this as part of your bid if appropriate.
7. There is particular interest in proposals that involve working with public institutions or those incorporating participation by diverse political groups.
8. Each organisation may only present one (1) Expression of Interest per cooperation outcome.
9. Purchase of capital goods, including infrastructure, properties, furniture and/or IT equipment, is not authorised.

## **Gender Equality Manifesto**

The British Government is committed to achieving gender equality at home and worldwide, which is why we pushed for a standalone Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender. We are committed to a foreign policy, which consciously and consistently delivers for women and girls. This is not only the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do. Women make up over 50% of the population and deserve to have their voices heard and their rights protected. We believe girls and women everywhere should be treated equally, be empowered and be safe.

As such, we expect that all projects funded by the Embassy are gender mainstreamed by:

- paying careful consideration to the level of female participation in the delivery of project activities, which applies both for implementers and beneficiaries
- understanding and responding to the different needs of women and girls taking part/benefited by the project, which should be considered at the project design stage, during its implementation and as part of the evaluation of the project impact
- considering and preparing for the differentiated impact the activities may have on women and girls taking part in the project

## Who may send in their Expression of Interest?

- state institutions – at all levels
- non-governmental organisations (NGOs), legally registered
- universities
- think tanks
- private sector and commerce and industry chambers

Before applying, please be sure you are able to submit the following legal documentation, when required by the Embassy (do not forward these documents when applying):

- digital copy of the Trade Register/Articles of Incorporation (Registro Mercantil o Acta Constitutiva)
- copy of the Fiscal Registration identification number (Registro de Identificación Fiscal (RIF))
- letterheaded document specifying bank account details
- a copy of the Identity Card (Cédula) of the legal representative of the organisation

## What is the process timeline?

7 February 2020	Call for potential implementers to send in their Expressions of Interest opens
8 March 2020	Deadline for potential project implementers to send in their Expressions of Interest
30 March 2020	Embassy notifies shortlisted potential project implementers of their semi-finalist status, and asks them to develop a full project bid, accompanied by its Activity Based Budget (ABB), aimed at achieving one of the specified outcomes
12 April 2020	Deadline for implementers to submit full project bid and ABB
5 May 2020	Embassy project board meets and approves projects
6 May 2020	Embassy notifies decisions of the project board
By 22 May 2020	Grant agreements/contracts/MOUs signed with approved project implementers and project implementations starts

## **How does the selection process work?**

If you think your organisation can support the Embassy in the delivery of our cooperation objectives, please complete the format attached in English and forward it to [projects.caracas@fco.gov.uk](mailto:projects.caracas@fco.gov.uk) by the indicated deadline, including the name of your organisation in the subject line (e.g. Asociación Venezolana de Investigaciones Sociales).

ODT, 36KB

This file is in an [OpenDocument](#) format

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The form is designed to determine why your organisation is best suited to deliver a project aimed at achieving one of our cooperation outcomes, what type of activities you envisage as part of a project funded by the Embassy, how much it would cost and with whom you would partner up to deliver project activities. Please note we will not consider proposals presented in a different format.

After receiving your Expression of Interest, the Embassy will produce a shortlist according to agreed criteria such as whether the project is Official Development Assistance (as per OECD definition), is sustainable in the long-term, has a multiplying effect, represents value-for-money and is gender mainstreamed.

These criteria are reflected in an appraisal matrix the Embassy uses to mark potential project implementers. Those with higher marks will be shortlisted and required to develop a full project bid. Please note the Embassy may consider asking organisations to join up as partners and work on a full project bid together.

**IMPORTANT:** Successful implementers will be contacted by e-mail. If you have not been contacted by 31 March, your proposal has not been successful. Unfortunately, the Embassy is not able to provide feedback on unsuccessful proposals.

The Embassy project board will then meet in May 2020 to assess project bids. The Embassy expects to sign grant contracts by mid-May.

## **What comprises the monitoring process for projects?**

Once approved, and in accordance with the grant agreement/contract/MoU, the implementing organisation must submit quarterly reports and a final evaluation report.

Please note that Embassy staff will keep in touch with your organisation throughout the project implementation and may call for monitoring meetings or participate in project activities.

A few examples of projects financed by the Embassy:

- creation of a network of organisations aimed at tackling violence against women and girls in Venezuela
- diploma course on a culture of peace and human rights for civil servants in Mérida municipalities
- raising awareness on LGBTI rights with police officers
- training on PRECIS Climate Modelling System for government officials
- enabling reduction of subsidies of Liquefied Petroleum Gas
- implementation of an on-line participatory budget and procurement system in eight Venezuelan mayoralties.