

# UK – Egypt announce joint economic partnership



Department  
for International  
Development

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Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom Alok Sharma and Minister of International Cooperation for the Arab Republic of Egypt Dr. Rania Al-Mashat have agreed in a joint statement to enhance economic cooperation.

Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom Alok Sharma said:

The UK is committed to deepening its bilateral cooperation with Egypt and growing our strong trading relationship. Our joint statement paves the way for us to intensify our economic partnership and support Egypt to develop a sustainable economy that can benefit future generations.

Minister of International Cooperation of Egypt Dr. Rania Al-Mashat said:

The UK is a strategic partner to Egypt and I look forward to strengthening the cooperation between our two countries. Together, we will work on the full implementation of the programs in our joint statement, which are designed to achieve sustainable economic growth by delivering on Egypt's 2030 vision consistent with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

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# International Development Secretary launches new venture to create rich pipeline of infrastructure projects across Africa

- Alok Sharma announces new landmark infrastructure partnerships with Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and the African Development Bank
- New British facility to generate billions of pounds of private sector investment for sustainable energy, transport and telecommunications projects in African countries
- Alok Sharma commits to boosting investment in green, quality infrastructure such as solar energy

The UK is partnering with five African countries to mobilise private sector investment in quality, environmentally-friendly infrastructure projects, International Development Secretary Alok Sharma announced today (20 January).

Speaking at the UK-Africa Investment Summit in London and ahead of an infrastructure investment forum tomorrow (Tuesday, 21 January) Mr Sharma said the UK will partner with Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and Uganda to design a new facility to plan, deliver and support finance to a range of infrastructure projects across Africa that are attractive to businesses and investors.

Sustainability will be central to these new infrastructure projects, focusing on investments with low carbon emissions and projects that will be resilient to a changing climate.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

Investing in quality infrastructure enables children to travel to school and parents to go to work to provide for their families. It lets people keep food in fridges and provides light so children can do their homework at night. It also powers factories, phones and computers to connect people and grow businesses. It is the difference between surviving and thriving.

Using world-leading British expertise in infrastructure and investment, including from the City of London, the UK will support our partners across Africa to build their projects in an environmentally-friendly way and bring them successfully to market.

Alongside this, Mr Sharma pledged extra UK aid to help African governments raise finance to deliver much needed high-quality public sector infrastructure projects, such as building schools and hospitals and boosting access to clean energy and water supplies for the poorest people.

Mr Sharma also announced a new infrastructure partnership with the African Development Bank (AfDB) to boost quality infrastructure projects throughout Africa and drive economic growth.

The announcements come alongside [recommendations from the International Development Infrastructure Commission, established by Mr Sharma, which reported back today](#), identifying a lack of attractive infrastructure investment opportunities as one of the barriers to investment in these African countries.

## **Notes to editors:**

For details on the [UK-Africa Investment summit click here](#)

Eight of the world's 15 fastest growing countries are African but currently 600 million Africans do not have access to electricity. Mobilising private sector funding in infrastructure is essential to help plug the annual \$2.5 trillion gap that the poorest countries need to meet the Global Goals.

The five partnerships with African countries have been agreed to scope the design of a new UK project development facility, to develop a pipeline of investible projects and generate additional private sector investment into low-carbon, sustainable infrastructure. The total cost of this facility will be determined through the design of the facility. These are the first in a set of potential further partnerships to develop this new approach.

The UK will also provide up to £350 million of new funding for Africa to help the poorest countries develop, procure and finance affordable, high-quality, sustainable infrastructure projects.

DFID and the African Development Bank (AfDB) are establishing a new partnership – with UK aid providing £85 million of backing – that will lead to infrastructure development and financing in Africa across water, transport, energy and ICT sectors. This will help deliver quality infrastructure investment in member countries, boosting economic growth and helping to end poverty.

The [International Development Infrastructure Commission published its report today](#). The recommendations focus on two key areas: increasing the pipeline of investable infrastructure projects which are sustainable and resilient, and generating private capital investment into the sector.

On his recent visit to Kenya, Alok Sharma announced a new UK Centre for Cities and Infrastructure, backed by £48 million of UK aid, of which £30 million will go to support projects in Africa. The Centre will provide British expertise to African governments and city authorities to improve the way cities are planned, built and run, including making them more

environmentally-friendly. It will focus on improvements to infrastructure, including water and energy networks.

Mr Sharma also announced an expansion of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) Cities and Infrastructure for Growth programme to Ghana, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, which helps UK businesses invest in quality, resilient infrastructure, boosts access to reliable and affordable power and creates construction jobs.

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## [Making NGOs' voices heard at the UN](#)

We can't overestimate, I think, the powerful role in civil society can and does play in protecting and promoting human rights, democratic values and holding those in power to account. Our work here at the UN and across the globe would not be as effective without the contribution of civil society organisations. Individuals across the world look to civil society to help make their lives better and fairer.

And that's why, as the United Kingdom, we are committed to championing civil society globally, including across the work the UN. In November, during our presidency of the Security Council, we intentionally put people at the heart of our work. In line with that focus, we invited a number of members of civil society to participate in briefings. We produced, Mr Chairman, a booklet of the most compelling of those briefings, called 'Security Council Voices'. And if any colleague would like a copy, they are very welcome to contact the UK Mission. We value the important contributions of NGOs in the UN's work, and that's why we're pleased to announce the UK's candidacy for the NGO Committee last October during Third Committee. We will champion civil society at every opportunity.

Sadly, and as we have heard here at the UN, we do not always give civil society the platform they deserve to inform, discuss and debate across the UN agenda. The Committee is considering 360 NGO applications that it already has a backlog of 272 deferred applications. This state of affairs can't continue. The Committee's role is to facilitate access, not impede it through bureaucracy. We believe the committee should take action to ensure the backlog is dealt with quickly and fairly and that NGOs have the opportunity to address any concerns the committee might have before a decision is reached.

The NGO Committee knows well that many civil society organisations operate in challenging environments where their ability to work is blocked or restricted. We need to work together to ensure that the UN does not ever fall into that category. This committee is at the heart of making the UN a safe and welcoming environment and all of us have a part to play in making that a reality.

As UN member states, we can benefit from NGOs' experience and unique viewpoint on issues, common interests. We all said this in 2018 when this committee held the first ever consultations with civil society. We believe it's a shame that we did not hold such consultations last year and we do hope the committee might reinstate them this year.

In 2019, the United Kingdom publicly highlighted the support we give to human rights defenders across the world. We published a document called 'UK Support for Human Rights Defenders', making it publicly available online in all six official UN languages to ensure the widest reach. At the past session of Third Committee, we led on joint statement on reprisals on behalf of 71 member states. We were greatly encouraged by the statement's strong cross-regional support, demonstrating wide recognition of the vital role human rights defenders play in advancing all of our rights and freedoms. We ask all members here and the Committee to publicly welcome and support their work.

In ending, I would like to urge the Committee to do three things. Firstly, to resolve the many deferred applications fairly and transparently. Secondly, to announce a date for the next consultation meeting with NGOs. And thirdly, to promote a safe and welcoming space for civil society to voice their views. All three of these things are important and achievable, and we hope 2020 will be the year that the Committee recognises the importance of civil society to the UN and to people around the globe who struggle to enjoy the full range of their human rights.

Thank you.

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## [Andrew Latchmore, Paul Mancey, and Monica Turner appointed as Trustees of the Royal Armouries](#)

Andrew Latchmore studied Law at Leeds University and has over 40 years' experience working as a lawyer focusing primarily on commercial property development work acting for both private and public sector clients. He was a Partner at Eversheds (now Eversheds Sutherland) for 25 years and served as National Managing Partner Client Services for the firm. In 2003 he became a partner at Shulmans LLP in Leeds where he is now a consultant having served on the firm's Management Board for a number of years. Andrew has been actively involved in working to promote the City of Leeds alongside Leeds Chamber of Commerce, Leeds City Council, Leeds City Region and a wide range of other stakeholders. He is currently a member of two of Leeds Local Enterprise Partnership's panels and is Deputy Chairman of Leeds Business Improvement District.

Paul Mancey is an experienced Chief Executive Officer and Non-Executive

Director who has built many new businesses and services in over 20 years at board level. Paul began his career in consumer marketing for Britvic and then Colgate-Palmolive before taking on commercial, strategic and leadership positions in multinational retail businesses. At Tesco his roles included UK Non-Food Director, European Strategy Director, Thailand Commercial Director and he set up Tesco Home Shopping. At Asda Wal-Mart his roles included UK Food Director and New Business & Services Director where he created and launched Asda Financial Services. After Asda, he moved to the private sector to be the CEO of a group of companies that included social care, construction, manufacturing, software and commercial valuations businesses. He bought out the social care company and grew it from its Yorkshire base to become a UK market leader and he was on the board of Care England. Paul has a degree in Industrial Economics from the University of Nottingham and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

Monica Turner started her career as an auditor after graduating from the University of Bradford with a degree in Business Studies. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. She has worked in Retail for the last 24 years in the UK, the USA and Canada, holding senior finance roles at ASDA and US eCommerce businesses. Monica is not new to the Trustee role, having served as a Pensions Trustee for 5 years. Monica lives in York and has a passion for the history and heritage of the city, serving on the Committee of the Association of Voluntary Guides of York.

These roles are not remunerated. This appointment has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Neither Mr Latchmore, Mr Mancey or Ms Turner have declared any Political Activity.

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## [New measures to improve building safety standards](#)

- Government committed to delivering the biggest change in building safety for a generation
- Housing Secretary announces the new Building Safety Regulator within the Health and Safety Executive, to be established immediately
- Government sets out clarified and consolidated advice for building owners, proposal to extend cladding ban, update on fire sprinklers
- Response to Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry published
- Building owners who have not taken action to make their buildings safe will be named from next month

The slow pace of improving building safety standards will not be tolerated, the Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick warned today (20 January 2020), as he announced measures that go further and faster to ensure residents are safe in their homes.

To give effective oversight of the design, construction and occupation of high-risk buildings – a regulator will be at the heart of a new regime – and established as part of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Building owners are responsible for ensuring their buildings are safe and where there is no clear plan for remediation, the government will work with local authorities to support them in their enforcement options.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr Jenrick also made clear that from next month he will start to name building owners where remediation has not started to remove unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding from their buildings.

While government action in this area has led to considerable progress to remove unsafe cladding, there are still some building owners who have been too slow to act.

Mr Jenrick confirmed the government will consult on extending the ban on combustible materials to buildings below 18 metres and we will seek views on how risks are assessed within existing buildings to inform future policy.

The package comes as the Prime Minister has written to the chairman of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry, Sir Martin Moore-Bick, updating him on the government's response to Phase 1.

The Prime Minister and Housing Secretary also met with bereaved, survivors and residents of the Grenfell Tower fire in Downing Street last week.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

The government is committed to bringing about the biggest change in building safety for a generation.

Progress on improving building safety needs to move significantly faster to ensure people are safe in their homes and building owners are held to account.

That's why today I'm announcing a major package of reforms, including establishing the Building Safety Regulator within the Health and Safety Executive to oversee the new regime and publishing consolidated guidance for building owners.

Unless swift progress is seen in the coming weeks, I will publicly name building owners where action to remediate unsafe ACM cladding has not started. There can be no more excuses for delay, I'm demanding immediate action.

Today's package of measures includes:

## **Building Safety Regulator**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will quickly begin to establish the new regulator in shadow form immediately, ahead of it being fully established, following legislation.

It will raise building safety and performance standards, including overseeing a new, more stringent regime for higher-risk buildings.

With a strong track record of working with industry and other regulators to improve safety, they will draw on experience and the capabilities of other regulators to implement the new regime. Dame Judith Hackitt will chair a Board to oversee the transition.

Chair of the Health and Safety Executive, Martin Temple said:

We are proud the government has asked HSE to establish the new Building Safety Regulator.

HSE's vast experience of working in partnership with industry and others to improve lives will ensure people are confident the creation of the new regulator is in good hands.

## **Advice on building safety for multi-storey, multi-occupied buildings**

Recent high-rise fires, including that in a block of student flats in Bolton in November 2019, have highlighted that many building owners have still not taken sufficient measures to ensure the safety of residents in buildings at all heights.

The government appointed independent expert advisory panel (IEAP) has clarified and updated advice to building owners on actions they should take to ensure their buildings are safe, with a focus on their external wall systems, commonly referred to as cladding.

This [consolidated advice](#) simplifies the language, consolidates previous advice into one place, and – vitally – makes clear that building owners need to do more to address safety issues on residential buildings under 18 metres.

It additionally reflects the independent panel view that cladding material comprised of ACM (and other metal composites) with an unmodified polyethylene core should not be on residential buildings of any height and should be removed.

A call for evidence will also be published, seeking views on the assessment of risks within existing buildings. This important step will help to gather ideas and lead to research which will provide a firm evidence base to guide decisions for both existing buildings and future regulatory regimes.



## **Fire doors**

The consolidated advice also makes clear the actions building owners should take in relation to fire doors.

The government welcomes the commitment by the Association of Composite Door Manufacturers to work with building owners to remediate their doors which failed tests.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure that this commitment is followed through.

## **Remediation of buildings with ACM cladding**

To speed up remediation, we will be appointing a construction expert to review remediation timescales and identify what can be done to improve pace in the private sector.

To ensure cost is not a barrier to remediation, the government is considering different options to support the remediation of buildings. We are examining options to mitigate costs for individuals or provide alternative financing routes.

## **Combustible cladding ban**

The government has also launched a consultation into the current combustible cladding ban, including proposals to lower the 18 metre height threshold to at least 11 metres.

## **Sprinklers**

The government's [consultation on sprinklers and other measures for new build flats](#) concluded on 28 November 2019.

We have proposed lowering the height threshold for sprinkler requirements in new buildings and will set out detailed proposals on how the government will deliver the technical review of fire guidance in February.

## **Fire Safety Bill**

The government has also set out further details of the upcoming Fire Safety Bill being introduced to Parliament, which we set out in more detail in our response to the Public Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations.

This will clarify the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – ‘the Fire Safety Order’ – requiring residential building owners to fully consider and mitigate the risks of any external wall systems and front doors to individual flats.

The changes will make it easier to enforce where building owners have not remediated unsafe ACM by complementing the powers under the Housing Act.