

UK exports boost critical infrastructure projects in Africa

- Support has led to UK contracts for six national infrastructure projects across Africa
- Businesses supported come from across the UK and from a range of sectors

The International Trade Secretary, Liz Truss, announced today (Monday, 20th January) at the UK-Africa Investment Summit that UK Export Finance (UKEF) has provided financing worth £620 million to support UK exports to Ghana, Zambia, Gabon and Uganda.

Support provided by UKEF has unlocked overseas contracts for UK exporters to provide goods and services for 6 national infrastructure projects across Africa, bringing significant social and economic benefits to the continent.

The £620 million of financing support provided by UKEF will provide:

- 750 hospital beds for maternity care in Ghana
- an upgraded terminal at Kumasi airport
- 600 hospital beds and 108 rural healthcare centres powered by solar energy in Zambia
- an industrial business park set to create 200,000 jobs in Uganda
- upgrades to over 80 km of road surfaces in Gabon
- supply of equipment to a Ugandan roads project

International Trade Secretary, Liz Truss said:

Africa is home to 8 of the 15 fastest growing economies in the world and its economic prosperity matters to the UK.

We want the UK to be the partner of choice in Africa so I am delighted that, with UKEF's support, British expertise will form a key component of these infrastructure projects that will directly improve millions of lives.

We are committed to strengthening our trading relationships in the region, to help deliver jobs and long-term, sustainable economic growth that will benefit African and British businesses alike.

Today's announcements build on a range of infrastructure projects UK Export Finance has enabled in Africa, providing close to £2 billion worth of support in the last 2 years.

As such, UKEF has also increased its risk appetite in Egypt, Nigeria and Rwanda, making extra support available for UK exports to Africa.

UKEF's country limit for trade with Rwanda has increased fivefold, now worth

up to £500 million, while its available support to Nigeria has doubled to £1.25 billion and its capacity to support for exports to Egypt is now worth £1.25 billion.

Fabio Camara, Director at Contracta Construction UK, said:

The modernisation of Kumasi Teaching Hospital and airport terminal will bring real benefits and we are pleased to be leading on their delivery. UKEF support continues to be invaluable in our expansion into emerging economies.

Carl Fergusson, Chief Executive Officer, Colas Limited, said:

UKEF's flexible finance was key to securing this contract, which will have a marked impact on the lives of people in Gabon and on our future growth. Their support for this project and of other infrastructure projects in the region demonstrates the UK government's commitment to growing UK trade with Africa.

Frederik Hsu, Deputy Chairman, NMS Infrastructure Limited, said:

This high social impact project will be transformational on healthcare and the lives of local people, especially in remote areas. UKEF's flexible finance has made it possible for our company to deliver these benefits while also generating significant exports for the UK as well as creating hundreds of local jobs in Zambia.

We would have been unable to commit to the delivery of this project without the professional support of UKEF and the team at DIT. We look forward to starting these projects and to seeing the impact they will have on the local economy.

Alan McMenemy, Commercial Manager, Unatrac, said:

We are delighted UKEF has chosen to support our business in Uganda. Their flexible finance played a key role in the securing of this contract. The deal will underpin and enhance our supply chain partnerships with prime contractors involved in infrastructure improvement in Uganda.

Lagan Chairman, Kevin Lagan said:

Following the successful sale of our building materials business to Breedon plc in 2018, we have targeted a range of exciting new

projects which support economic growth and infrastructural development nationally and internationally.

We have a strong track record working in Africa and the upgrade of Kampala Industrial Business Park strengthens our footprint in the region and supports the regeneration of a very important area of Uganda.

The UK-Africa Investment Summit reflects the commitment by the governments to strengthen economic ties between the UK and Africa and the Lagan team is delighted to play its part in this process, which not only supports our business, but is a welcome boost to the economies of both Northern Ireland and Uganda.

Full details of UKEF's £620m of support for UK export deals:

Ghana

- Support worth £110 million will enable the upgrade and construction of a hospital in Ghana. Contracta Construction UK will upgrade Kumasi teaching hospital, creating 750 beds for maternity care
- Kumasi teaching hospital is the main regional hospital for the Ashanti region in south Ghana. Upgrading the maternity unit will have a direct impact on reducing mother and child mortality rates
- £40 million worth of support will enable the further development of Kumasi airport by Contracta Construction UK, improving transport links for tourist and commercial use. It is estimated that the upgraded airport will allow travel for an extra one million passengers each year

Zambia

- A direct loan of £244 million will support the design, construction, equipping and operation of 108 rural healthcare clinics and three hospitals by NMS Limited
- Each rural clinic will be powered by solar energy, ensuring renewable, reliable power in remote areas

Gabon

- £40 million worth of support will enable a project by Colas (Gabon) UK Ltd to upgrade 83 km of road networks throughout Libreville, the country's capital

- This work will benefit an estimated one million people living in the area

Uganda

- Support worth close to £185 million will enable crucial work on the Kampala Industrial Business Park. Belfast based Lagan Group limited has partnered with Ugandan company DOTT services, to deliver a range of projects including upgrades to roads, water supply, power, IT and telecoms
- Once fully developed, the park will create employment opportunities for 200,000 people improving the country's GDP and the competitiveness of Uganda's exports
- UKEF has also supported a £1.5 million loan to enable the sale of machinery from Unatrac to Mota-Engil Africa, underpinning work on roads in the North East of Uganda
- Delivered through UKEF's new small deals team this will enable the sale of 22 pieces of machinery including loaders, engines, excavators and generators, initially for use on the Uganda North Eastern Road Corridor Asset Management Project (NERAMP)

[Ambassador Rampling renews UK's commitment to Tripoli](#)

During his latest visit to Lebanon's second largest city – his first regional visit in 2020 – British Ambassador Chris Rampling reiterated the UK's ongoing support to the people of Tripoli. Ambassador Rampling announced a further \$1.7 million supporting the city's economy reaching the most vulnerable under the Lebanese Host Communities Support Programme (LHSP) in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and UNDP Lebanon. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the British Council Director David Knox and Tripoli's Mayor Dr Riad Yamak, renewing the UK's commitment to supporting the most vulnerable communities.

Over the past year the UK's investment in Tripoli has reached over \$5 million, in support of delivering better public services, economic opportunities, security and promoting social stability to the most vulnerable refugees.

Ambassador Rampling met with Mayor Dr Riad Yamak and discussed latest developments in the country and shared the UK's concern at the serious economic and social situation that is affecting people's lives. He also visited the Lebanese Armed Forces' 12 Brigade training facility along with the youth group of Tripoli's Bab el Dehab as part of MARCH NGO's initiative to strengthen civil and military cooperation for peacebuilding in Tripoli.

Listening to a group of Tripolitan business leaders at Tripoli's Special Economic Zone, Ambassador Rampling heard about the challenges facing Lebanon's economy in general and Tripoli in particular and called for the urgent formation of a government to take forward necessary reforms.

Ambassador Rampling visited Fadi Sabbouh whose business has been supported by the Lebanon Enterprise and Employment Programme (LEEP) funded by the UK. Fadi has been able to expand his business and create 4 new, sustainable jobs. The programme is providing up to \$20 million between 2017-2020 to support SMEs across Lebanon grow their businesses and create sustained jobs.

At the end of his visit, Ambassador Rampling said:

I am pleased to be back in Tripoli, on my first official visit outside Beirut in 2020. As promised, the UK continues to deliver with actions and not just words. I am here today to renew the UK's continued commitment to Tripoli and its people, and, over the past year, the UK's investment has reached over \$5 million to Tripoli alone. Lebanon is passing through an important time in its history. We see the Lebanese people across Lebanon voicing their demands for reform, transparency and better governance. Lebanon needs a government more than ever to carry out reforms and protect Lebanon's stability.

British High Commission brings the Great Debate to Balochistan

The British High Commission continued the fifth edition of its GREAT Debate competition with a regional round at the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management (BUIITEMS) in Quetta last week.

The competition featured 27 students from 9 different universities across Balochistan. At the end of an intense competition, Asmat Ullah from BUIITEMS was the winner and Muhammad Umair from the University of Balochistan was the runner-up.

The GREAT Debate competition is taking place from December 2019 to March 2020 in 6 cities across Pakistan.

Fouzia Younis, Director of Communication at the British High Commission said:

I am delighted that we have brought our GREAT Debate competition to Balochistan for the second consecutive year. It's fantastic to see the vibrancy and energy of the youth of Quetta who have participated in this competition in strong numbers. The topics that were debated included climate change, an important issue that will shape our future. This is especially important as the UK prepares to host a major UN summit on climate change in November 2020.

The competition gives the youth of this country a platform to participate in debates, interact with other students from different universities and hone their skills in research, analytical thinking and public speaking. These skills will enable them to contribute to a brighter future for Pakistan.

I wish the winner and runner-up the best of luck for the final in Islamabad.

Dr Faisal Kakar, The Pro Vice Chancellor of BUITEMS, said:

Debate and discourse distinguishes us as human. Never has the characteristic been more important than in the 21st century. I am delighted that the British High Commission has brought its GREAT Debate competition for the students of Balochistan again.

University students across Pakistan who are interested in debating and taking part in the GREAT Debate competition can register immediately on greatdebate.com.pk

This is the fifth annual edition of the British High Commission's GREAT Debate competition. Since 2015, the competition has taken place across 15 universities and 12 cities in Pakistan. The previous winners of the GREAT Debate competition were: Gaudhan Aslam from Forman Christian College in Lahore, Taha Ahmed from Aga Khan University in Karachi, Mohiba Ahmed and Haris Ali Virk from Government College University in Lahore.

Further information

The GREAT Debate is a debating competition for university students. There will be 6 events – in 6 different cities (Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and Faisalabad) involving students from leading universities across Pakistan – and the winner and runner-up of each round will compete in the final in Islamabad.

The regional rounds have taken place in Lahore and Quetta. The upcoming

regional rounds are in Peshawar, Islamabad, Faisalabad and Karachi at the end of January and early February.

The winner and runner-up of the overall competition will receive a scholarship reward to contribute towards their tuition fees.

Contact
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Further information

For updates on the British High Commission, please follow our social media channels:

Indian parliamentarians tour UK's largest aircraft carrier

Six Indian parliamentarians toured the UK's brand new aircraft carrier, HMS Prince of Wales, on 16 January 2020 as part of the UK-India Chevening Parliamentarian Fellowship Programme.

HMS Prince of Wales is one of two Royal Navy aircraft carriers and was commissioned on 10 December 2019. Its sister aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, will operate in the Indian Ocean Region on her first operational deployment in 2021.

The parliamentarians are in the UK for a week, focusing on five UK-India priorities: climate change, public healthcare, parliamentary democracy, finance, and defence and security. They were also hosted in the House of Lords, met the Chief Executive of University College London Hospital, and discussed cybersecurity at the University of Portsmouth.

Further information

- Hi-resolution images of the parliamentarians touring the HMS Prince of Wales can be downloaded from our [Flickr page](#).
- The Chevening Parliamentarian Fellowship Programme is a week long programme in the UK which gives Indian MPs the opportunity to discuss key contemporary issues impacting the world with counterparts and other

senior interlocutors in the UK. The MPs are meeting the UK's top opinion formers and decision-makers to exchange ideas, solutions and develop future networks and contacts. The tailor-made programme focuses on leadership, international relations, social and public policy as well as issues relevant to both India and the UK such as clean energy, health, education and smart cities. The programme is hosted by London School of Economics (LSE).

Media

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[Call for bids: British Embassy Beijing's International Programme Fund 2020/21](#)



Call for Bids: British Embassy Beijing's International Programme Fund 2020/21

All project bids must aim to promote, protect, and improve human rights and the rule of law in China. Issues on which we welcome bids include – but are not limited to – the below:

- Rights-protection, fairness, and effectiveness in China's legal and judicial system, including on reducing death penalty

- Freedom of religion or belief and cultural rights
- Freedom of expression, including media freedom and academic freedom
- Civil society
- Human rights defenders

We welcome bids from organisations based in China and internationally. Projects do not have to implement inside China.

Selection criteria

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria:

- project impact: delivering sustainable, meaningful change to human rights in China
- project viability: including the capacity of implementing organisation to deliver outcomes
- project design: there must be clear links between the proposed activity and the project outcomes
- risk management: robust analysis of key risks, and a plan of action to manage and mitigate those risks
- value for money: including the number of direct beneficiaries and the scale of achievable outcomes

We draw your attention to the below key points:

- Proposals should be between £5,000 – £10,000 (44,000RMB – 88,000RMB)
- The entire project must begin and complete in the period 01 January 2021 and 31 March 2021.
- All funding must be activity-based (ie: not for general staff costs, office rental etc.).

Process

- Project proposals must be received by 23:59 (GMT) on Monday 14 December. Late proposals will not be considered.
- Proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only (Project Proposal Form and Activity Based Budget), which must be completed in English.
- Proposals must be submitted to: China.InternationalProgramme@fco.gov.uk

Attachments

[Activity Based Budget](#) (ODS, 10.3KB)

[Project proposal form – Projects under £80,000](#) (ODT, 203KB)

Guidance

[ABB Form – Guidance](#) (ODT, 30.3KB)

[Project Proposal Form – Guidance](#) (ODT, 15.6KB)

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1. 4 December 2020

Update bids for 1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021

2. 2 April 2020

Updated

3. 26 February 2020

The deadline for receiving project bids has been amended to 23:59 (GMT)
Sunday 5 April

4. 20 January 2020

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