

British Ambassador congratulates new President of Guatemala



Commenting on the recent Presidential and Legislative inaugurations, Ambassador Whittingham said:

I welcome the inauguration of President Alejandro Giammattei, following successful elections in 2019. I am pleased that the President has placed an emphasis on prosperity, social development and the need to promote reconciliation, good governance and the rule of law during his term in office.

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Bringing the political process forward in Yemen

Thank you very much, Mr President and welcome once again to the Special Envoy and also to the Director. And thank you for both of your briefings and also thank you for your tireless efforts and those of your team on this very acute problem. I think it's clear from what we've heard today that a political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and also address the humanitarian crisis.

The Security Council, this Council, has a vital role to play in supporting the peace process. And I'd therefore like to begin by welcoming the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2505 on Monday, renewing UNMHA's mandate.

There's a number of things I'd like to say, Mr President so I'll break them down into different headings. On the Riyadh agreement, to start there, we

strongly support the Saudi-brokered agreement. It's vital to stabilising the south and key for an overall peace process. And therefore, the 9 January announcement of a military agreement to make progress on Riyadh, as well as the report of prisoner exchanges is very welcome. And I was interested in what, Martin, you had to say about reconvening the Prisoners Exchange Committee. So let's hope that that goes well. Announcements do need to be followed by implementation on the ground and the formation of a new Yemeni government is critical to progress.

On de-escalation, I think it is very welcome that there has been a tangible decrease in inflammatory rhetoric and an apparent decrease in violence around the Saudi border. And that's a good demonstration of political will. The announcement on 20 September that the Houthis would see strikes on Saudi Arabia is particularly welcome. But obviously that needs to be properly enforced and carried out. And we mustn't allow this small window of hope to close; I think that's one message I took away from what you Martin was saying. It's vital Yemen doesn't become hostage to a wider regional crisis. And we do hope that the International Community can come together to press the Houthis not to become a vehicle for wider retaliation from Iran in the region.

Ultimately, though, as we know, any sustainable peace process needs to be underpinned by a comprehensive security agreement. And brazen strikes, such as the Iranian missile strike on Aramco last year, place that prize in jeopardy.

On the humanitarian side, Mr President, thank you to the Director for his briefing. I think the core message that stands out there is that this is still the largest humanitarian crisis. And it was alarming to hear that some of the factors that brought Yemen to the brink of famine are returning. So we share OCHA's sense of urgency on this. We also hope that humanitarian workers can be allowed to do their work properly. And we pay tribute to the work of the humanitarian coordinator and the country team.

What, Martin, you told us about WHO Mercy Flights is obviously extremely important and a bit of good news. I understand there have been intimidation of humanitarian workers and this is not limited to Houthi areas. And I just wanted to take this opportunity to support the statement that the emergency relief coordinator made on 23 December condemning attacks on the premises of several humanitarian organisations in Al-Dhale city in December. Aid workers must be allowed to deliver their lifesaving support in safety.

On the oil tanker, I think we can only echo what the Director said; we do need this issue to be resolved. The consequences of a rupture or explosion are phenomenal. So we urge the Houthis to let the UN assessment team have access to the tanker. Continued inaction can only be described as reckless. So we hope that can be resolved soon.

On the economy, this is obviously a very difficult issue. We continue to encourage constructive engagement on the economy. We look forward to an ongoing injection of hard currency and greater public financial transparency because the problem is the shortfall faced by the Central Bank is extremely

concerning and could have serious implications for the humanitarian situation.

To come back to where I started, Mr President, I think all of this is obviously leading up to support for Martin as he tries to take the broader political process forward. But it's clear from what we've heard today that we can't afford any let-up in our support for that and the Special Envoy's work.

Thank you.

[Expanded Animal Welfare Committee recruits new experts](#)



In October 2019, the [Animal Welfare Committee \(AWC\)](#), formerly known as the Farm Animal Welfare Committee, expanded its remit to provide expert and detailed research and advice to Ministers in England, Scotland and Wales, on companion animals and wild animals kept by people, as well as farmed animals.

To support this new expanded remit, four new experts joined the Committee from 1 January 2020:

- Dr Pen Rashbass – farm animal welfare
- Dr Romain Pizzi – welfare of wild animals kept by people
- Professor Sarah Wolfensohn – welfare of wild animals kept by people
- Dr James Yeates – welfare of companion animals

The AWC also works closely with the European Forum of Animal Welfare Councils (EuroFAWC).

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[Muc-Off pays beach clean charity after failing to recycle packaging](#)

Dorset company Muc-Off has paid £7,669 towards a Marine Conservation Society beach cleaning project for failing to recycle sufficient packaging waste at its Poole headquarters.

Muc-Off Ltd, which makes car and bike cleaning products, made the enforcement undertaking offer after the Environment Agency found the company had broken packaging waste regulations.

Muc-Off is a popular manufacturer of cleaning products for cars and bikes

Tessa Bowering, for the Environment Agency, said:

The Marine Conservation Society is an appropriate recipient of this payment because most of the plastics washed up on beaches comes from packaging.

The money will be used to help fund the society's Beach Clean Project.

Muc-Off Ltd saved £5,899.72 by failing to register with a packaging recovery scheme for the years 2012-2016 inclusive. The company admitted two offences under the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations

of 2007 including failing to register and failing to take reasonable steps to recover and recycle waste packaging.

These regulations ensure packaging materials such as cardboard, plastics and glass are recycled and do not end up in landfill. Companies with a turnover of £2 million or more and handle more than 50 tonnes of packaging per year must ensure a certain percentage is recycled. They do this by registering with a packaging scheme or directly with the Environment Agency and provide evidence its packaging waste has been dealt with correctly.

Enforcement undertakings are voluntary offers from offenders to address the cause and effect of their offending. If accepted, an enforcement undertaking becomes a legally binding agreement between the Environment Agency and the offender and replaces the need for any other civil or criminal sanction, such as prosecution.