

Chevening supports Mexican woman to promote technology

Iliana Ramirez was born and raised in Mexico City, where she lived under extreme poverty in an area next to the city's landfill. The severity of her family's economic situation was such that they did not count with running water nor a toilet, and had to gather the end-of-the-day leftover produce from the market to subsist.

Notwithstanding this, Iliana never doubted that she would study a professional career as her mother taught her about the importance of education since being a young child, and hence, she went on to study a career in computer engineering from Mexico's National University. One of Iliana's main motivation to study computer engineering was hearing in a generalised way that women do not study technical careers.

After completing her career, Iliana worked in the Bank of Mexico where she formed part of the team that came up with the first technological development to transfer funds electronically between banking institutions. There, her colleagues motivated her to apply for the Chevening scholarship, and hence she travelled to the UK to study her Master's degree at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, in 1998.

Studying in the UK was a dream for Iliana, not only because of her desire to continue her academic development in the country that was at the forefront of software and computing advancements, but also because of the opportunity that represented studying overseas and coming back to Mexico to apply her knowledge.

One of the most profound lessons that Iliana shares from her time in the UK was understanding about the importance given to values such as equality, inclusion and diversity. Having been treated with equality inside and outside of the classroom, without regard of her gender, socioeconomic condition, or physical appearance was an experience that marked her for life, and as she tells it, a beautiful lesson of dignity and humanism.

Iliana's newly acquired knowledge catapulted her professionally upon coming back to Mexico, as she went from being a software developer to becoming leader for the implementation of the enterprise management system in the Bank of Mexico. Iliana now collaborates with teams of universities such as the MIT, the University of Colorado and other international teams, with the objective of developing the human capital in information technology that the state of Nuevo Leon and the country require.

For instance, through the programme Patronas Hermosas (or Beautiful Patterns), which she led until 2019 and is implemented jointly with Monterrey's Tech and the MIT, girls between ages 12 and 17 can develop their skills by using curricular materials from MIT that have been adapted to a Mexican context. This programme has had such success that it has taken place

in 24 states (out of 32) across Mexico and 1600 girls have participate in it.

Iliana also organises free summer camps for boys and girls to teach advanced subjects on information technology where 200 to 300 participants attend every year. This year (2002) the programme has extended to more than 500 participants, covering several countries in Latin America such as Peru, Chile, Venezuela, Ecuador and Guatemala.

There are also software development trainings for young men and women which include a personalised service to match their abilities with the required skills necessary to ensure a place in the recruitment process of potential employers. In summary, the programmes and projects that have taken place from 2014 to 2022, thanks to Iliana's leadership, have positively impacted 15 thousand girls and young men and women, from which 8600 are women.

Today Iliana continues to prioritise that these programmes that benefit women, girls and vulnerable groups keep expanding to other regions of Mexico and Latin America, focusing in achieving a differentiated impact in the most marginalised regions.

Studying in the United Kingdom, in the University of Manchester, in the same school as 25 Nobel laureates, made me realise that the limits created by ignorance, poverty, violence, and intolerance, may be torn down through the gift of education and good role models.

That just as the Chevening scholarship gave me the gift of living a radically different life for one year than the one I was accustomed, that everyone has an obligation to give opportunities to whom do not have them or do not see them, by teaching and offering time, mentorship, helping to eliminate the frontiers and paradigms that hinder creating plentiful, pacific and productive societies.

Keeping the public safe 24/7

Press release

Sunday 24 July is International Security Officers' Day.



Security Industry Authority

This is an important day in the Industry Calendar, as the day is celebrated here and around the world to recognise and thank the people who work tirelessly everyday – both visibly and behind the scenes – to keep us safe.

The date of the 24 July reflects that security work is a 24/7 occupation.

To mark this day in the UK, we are highlighting stories of security operatives from the different sectors and across the United Kingdom. We are celebrating the people behind the badge and paying tribute to their professionalism.

We have stories of real-life heroes who have saved lives, sometimes with a risk to their own safety and wellbeing.

We have security officers who at a moment's notice find themselves turning into first responders as they carry out critical first aid before the emergency teams arrive.

There are currently over 450,000 active SIA licences in the UK. Each licence holder will have undertaken training and checks to qualify for the SIA licence and badge so they can play their part in protecting the public.

On this [International Security Officers' Day](#), we salute and thank every security operative on the front line, guarding every second, every minute, every hour of public life and property.

Michelle Russell

Chief Executive, Security Industry Authority

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[**Foreign Secretary stresses the need**](#)

for full implementation of important deal to get grain out of Ukraine

- Grain shipments from Ukraine's Black Sea ports to resume under the terms of new UN deal
- UK has been at the forefront of efforts to secure international agreement, which will get up to 5 million tonnes of grain exports a month to the world's poorest people
- Foreign Secretary has stressed the need for the terms of the agreement to be respected by Russia

A United Nations-brokered agreement to resume grain exports from key Ukrainian Black Sea ports has the potential to help millions of people and must now be implemented, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said today.

The agreement, brokered in Istanbul by Ukraine, Turkey, the UN and Russia will allow up to 5 million tonnes of grain per month to be exported by commercial shipping companies through safe lanes in Ukrainian waters.

The resumption of maritime grain exports from Ukraine will be a positive step in addressing the global food security crisis, which has been severely exacerbated by Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, their destruction and theft of grain and the seizure and blockading of maritime ports.

The UK has pushed for the UN agreement, which will create a maritime corridor through which grain can be exported. Ministers and officials have provided advice to Ukraine and have consistently raised the issue with their counterparts, stressing the importance of Russian agreement to the UN proposal given their blockade of Ukrainian ports. Last month the Foreign and Defence Secretaries travelled to Turkey, whose work has been pivotal in securing this agreement. The Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and others have also put the grain security issue firmly on the agenda at the G7, NATO and G20 Summits this summer. The UK has also provided military equipment which helps to secure Ukrainian ports against attack from the sea.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine has meant some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world are at risk of having nothing to eat. It is vital that Ukrainian grain reaches international food markets, and we applaud Turkey and the UN Secretary General for their efforts to broker this agreement.

The UK and our allies have been pushing hard to reach this point. Now this agreement must be implemented, and we will be watching to ensure Russia's actions match its words. To enable a lasting return to global security and economic stability, Putin must end the war and withdraw from Ukraine.

Until Russia's invasion, Ukraine was one of the largest exporters of grains and vegetable oils, exporting grain to meet the needs of hundreds of millions of people worldwide. In 2021 Ukraine provided 30.9% of Egypt's grain and wheat consumption; 7.7% of Yemen's; 7% of Bangladesh's; 11.7% of Morocco's. Previously 96% of Ukrainian grain was exported through the Black Sea.

Today's agreement will entail joint controls for the checking of grain in ports and establish a co-ordination centre in Istanbul. There will now be an implementation period for the agreement before commercial ships start moving grain.

Notes to Editors:

Recognising the importance of predictable food supplies, the UK does not prohibit the export of Russian food and fertiliser to third countries. We have not offered any sanctions relief to reward Russia for allowing the legal and necessary export of Ukrainian grain.

In addition to efforts to open grain exports through the Black Sea, the UK has also been providing practical support including:

- Contributing up to £10 million in materials and equipment to Ukraine Railways to repair rail infrastructure and help get grain out of the country by rail.
- £1.5 million to develop a testing process to identify whether grain sold by Russia on the world market has been illegally taken from Ukraine.
- £372 million for countries most impacted by rising global food prices, which was announced at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in June.
- The UK and partners secured the largest ever World Bank financial commitment to low income countries around the world – \$170 billion, supporting countries faced with economic hardship as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

It is Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports and shelling of civilian infrastructure (including grain transshipment facilities) which is stopping exports (estimated to be 20+ million metric tonnes of grain). The blockade will also significantly impact the next harvest.

- Declassified US intelligence, and satellite imagery, confirm the Russian Navy were ordered to lay mines at the ports of Odesa and Ochakiv. US also has evidence that Russian mined the Dnipro River – all with the aim of causing the cessation of maritime trade.
 - Russia has consistently targeted grain related infrastructure. On 4 June, Russia destroyed Ukraine's second largest grain storage facility – decimating, possibly, millions of tonnes of food stuffs from wheat to soybeans in Mykolaiv.
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Jubilee design competition winner visits Ulster Carpets

The winner of the Northern Ireland's Office Platinum Jubilee design competition, Emily McMullan age 11 from Dundonald Primary School, has visited Ulster Carpets to help turn her design into a special gift for Her Majesty the Queen.

Emily was invited to meet the designers at Ulster Carpets after she was announced as the winner of the competition by Northern Ireland Minister of State Conor Burns during a special ceremony at Hillsborough Castle last month.

During her visit, Emily was given a tour of the factory by Ulster Carpet designers Sarah Healy and Sinead Tumilty, discussing her design and learning how it is being turned into a special gift for Her Majesty the Queen.

Minister of State for Northern Ireland Conor Burns accompanied Emily on her visit at Ulster Carpets, seeing some of the quality work and expertise that has seen the manufacturing company granted a Royal Warrant by Her Majesty.

Primary schools across Northern Ireland were offered the opportunity to take part in a unique competition to design a "snapshot" of Northern Ireland as part of this year's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Emily's design was chosen from over 2000 colourful and creative entries to the Northern Ireland Office competition, from children in schools from every county in Northern Ireland.

Once completed the specially designed jubilee rug will be delivered to Her Majesty the Queen as a gift from the children of Northern Ireland in her Jubilee year.

Speaking about her design and her visit, competition winner Emily McMullan said:

"I was very surprised to win the competition as there were so many other good entries. I did the design in my art class at school and I wanted to add as many places as possible that reminded me of home.

"I really enjoyed my visit to Ulster Carpets and learning how they design and make carpets. It has made me think about being a designer when I'm older."

Discussing Emily's design, Ulster Carpets designer Sinead Tumilty said:

"Emily's design shows a snapshot of multiple recognisable landmarks and structures from across Northern Ireland.

"The composition has been confidently and creatively considered, demonstrating a strong but refined illustrative style with a thoughtful use

of colour, line work and shading. This artwork has multiple elements which make it identifiable to Northern Ireland and Emily should be very proud.”

Speaking after the visit, Minister of State Conor Burns said:

“It is amazing to see Emily’s brilliant design beginning to come to life through the work of the talented designers at Ulster Carpets.

“Emily should be incredibly proud of her effort which showcases some of the very best of Northern Ireland’s beautiful and well known places.

“I look forward to seeing Emily and Ulster Carpets work being presented to the Royal Household later this year as a gift to mark the incredible and historic 70 years of service of the Queen.”

[Ukrainian Deputy Defence Minister visits Royal Navy mine-hunting training as part of UK visit](#)

Ukraine’s Deputy Defence Minister has met soldiers and sailors training in the UK during a visit to see first-hand Britain’s ongoing support for his country.

The UK has taken a leading role in supporting Ukraine in its efforts to defend itself from Russia’s illegal invasion, providing more military equipment than any country other than the US, and [launching a scheme to train 10,000 Ukrainian personnel](#).

Volodymyr Havrylov met with UK Armed Forces Minister James Heappey and visited parliamentarians to discuss what further support is required to meet the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Both ministers then travelled to Scotland, where Ukrainian sailors are being trained by the Royal Navy to operate Sandown Class Minehunter vessels, ahead of the sale of two such vessels in a deal [agreed last year under the Ukrainian Naval Capabilities Enhancement Programme \(UNCEP\)](#).

Ministers Havrylov and Heappey spoke with trainees and the Royal Navy instructors, observing them practicing key skills at sea, such as weapon drills and damage control, whilst learning to operate the machinery on the vessels.

Armed Forces Minister James Heappey said:

The intensity with which the Ukrainian soldiers and sailors are

training is something to behold. They work with the focus of troops who know they'll be fighting in a war in just a few short weeks' time.

Delivering training that matches that intensity and focus is not straightforward. The Royal Navy and the British Army are working long hours and drawing on all their operational experience to make sure their new Ukrainian friends are sent into combat with the best chance of victory.

Deputy Defence Minister Volodymyr Havrylov said:

I saw the brotherhood of Ukrainian and British soldiers working together to achieve a common goal – strengthening the combat capabilities of the Ukrainian army.

We are very grateful to the government and people of the United Kingdom for their invaluable contribution to Ukraine's success in repelling the Russian aggressors.

The two ministers also visited one of the locations where Ukrainian soldiers are being trained in essential battle-winning skills in a major new UK-led military programme.

More than 1,000 UK service personnel are involved in the programme, which is taking place at military sites across the North West, South West and South East of the UK. Each course will last several weeks and will be conducted by elements from 11 Security Force Assistance Brigade.

The training will give volunteer recruits with limited military experience the skills to be effective in frontline combat. Based on the UK's basic soldier training, the course covers weapons handling, battlefield first aid, fieldcraft, patrol tactics and the Law of Armed Conflict.

The visit of Ukraine's Deputy Defence Minister came in the same week as Defence Secretary Ben Wallace revealed [plans to supply scores of artillery guns, and hundreds of drones and anti-tank weapons to Ukraine](#) in the coming weeks.