

Presentation by Council of Europe Secretary General to OSCE: UK response, June 2022

Thank you, Chair. Thank you Chair and thank you Secretary General Burić for your comments. At your previous appearances before the Permanent Council, the UK recalled the important longstanding relationship between the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and that the relationship is rooted firmly in the promotion of human rights, rule of law, and democracy across the continent and beyond. Respect for these common principles defines our shared endeavours in Vienna and in Strasbourg. We meet today at a particularly challenging time for European Security and while President Putin's unjustified war in Ukraine continues, we are reminded that those common principles and commitments are needed more than ever.

Madam Secretary General – what you have said today and the focus of your annual report “Moving Forward 2022” links with recent discussions at this Permanent Council. We had also believed that the death and destruction from war belonged to Europe's past. Although that vision has been shattered, we share your determination to stand in solidarity with Ukraine and to take what action we can. We welcome the Council of Europe's swift and decisive action in responding to Russia's aggression. At the OSCE, we remain committed to holding accountable those who have committed unspeakable acts, including against vulnerable groups. This is why at last week's Permanent Council, 45 participating States with Ukraine's support [invoked the Moscow Mechanism for a second time](#), triggering a further independent investigation into Russia's war crimes in Ukraine. We will continue to use the full set of tools available to hold the Russian government and members of the armed forces committing atrocities to account.

Your priorities remind us of the important role played by the Council of Europe and OSCE/ODIHR, as well as the OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media and others, in supporting and helping to maintain our democratic environment and institutions. The regular cooperation between the Venice Commission and ODIHR is a clear example of how shared expertise can provide high quality assessments and advice. Such advice, when heeded by OSCE participating States, can help make a practical, positive difference to individual countries and their citizens.

Like you, we agree on the importance of civil society in creating and maintaining healthy democracies. Though we note that the space for civil society is shrinking and we are also seeing threats to freedom of expression in the OSCE region. The UK believes media freedom is a cornerstone of democracy. Madam Secretary – we are deeply concerned about the case of dual British – Russian national Vladimir Kara-Murza – an opposition politician, journalist and civil society activist who is currently imprisoned in Russia. He faces charges under the new legislation that criminalises spreading so-called “false information” about the Russian armed forces –carrying a weighty

five to ten year prison sentence. His sentencing is the latest attempt by Russian authorities to shutdown opposition to their policies. We call on the Russian Federation to release Vladimir Kara-Murza.

We are strong supporters of the invaluable role played by the OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media. A free media is essential for holding governments to account, allowing our citizens to debate issues freely, to challenge their governments and to make informed decisions. We particularly welcome therefore your recognition of the significance of freedom of expression both online and offline for democracy, including the importance of the safety of journalists.

The Council of Europe and the OSCE share much common ground. As we face up to a series of common challenges, it is important that we continue to recognise each organisation's individual merits and distinctiveness. We need to work in a coordinated way to employ the unique set of instruments and tools which each organisation offers to its participating and member States. In light of the serious challenges we face, those tools are needed now more than ever.

The UK is, and will remain, a steadfast supporter of the work of both the Council of Europe and the OSCE. We offer you, and your staff, our best wishes for your work in the months ahead.

UK general statement at the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Space has a way of bringing us all together around a common goal and we're proud of our collective achievements through COPUOS in the advancement of the peaceful use and exploration of outer space.

The United Kingdom appreciates that whilst we are here to talk about the peaceful uses of space, we cannot and should not ignore violations of international law when they occur on Earth.

Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state. The UK and our international partners stand united in condemning the Russian government's reprehensible actions, which are an egregious violation of international law including the UN Charter.

We call on Russia to urgently de-escalate and withdraw its troops. It must be held accountable and stop undermining democracy, global stability, and

international law.

Russia's actions in recent weeks have demonstrated that it is not 'peaceful' and that it no longer holds the respect or endorsement of its Eurasian partners. We cannot ignore Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In September 2021 the UK released its [National Space Strategy](#). This first ever National Space Strategy brings together the UK's strengths in science and technology, defence, regulation and diplomacy to pursue a bold national vision.

The Strategy highlights the UK's commitment to work with industry and internationally to ensure we have the safest and most effective regulation of space activities.

We attach great importance to the Long-Term Sustainability of the Outer Space Environment. The UK was pleased to fund important work with UNOOSA which included publishing the LTS guidelines in all 6 official UN languages and convening international expert events. For phase two of the project, UNOOSA conducted 42 interviews with Member States of COPUOS and international intergovernmental organizations to identify challenges associated with implementation. We are extremely pleased that the report setting out the key themes captured during those interviews has now been published on UNOOSA's website. We would like to thank the team at UNOOSA for all their hard work in pulling together such an informative resource.

We would also like to highlight that the UK and UNOOSA will be holding a side event on Thursday 9th June between 10 and 11 am, Vienna time, to talk about experiences in implementing the guidelines.

We must also consider the impact that the activities we carry out in space have on the Earth.

With regard to our launch ambitions, the UK has taken strong steps to balance the mitigation of potentially negative environmental impacts of spaceflight activities with enhancing the strong contributions that commercial spaceflight can make to both the economy and our local and global efforts to monitor the environment. Potential launch operators and spaceports must produce an assessment of environmental effects (AEE) of their proposed launch activities. Additionally, the UK has set environmental objectives on climate change, air quality, noise and the marine environment.

Chair,

The UK is delighted to have assumed the Presidency of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties – COP26 – in partnership with Italy, last year. We were proud to be the first major economy in the world to pass laws to end our country's contribution to global warming by 2050. We were also pleased to have hosted the G7 conference in Glasgow last year where delegates pledged to take action to tackle the growing hazard of space debris. Since then, the UK has partnered with companies including Astroscale, Clearspace and SSTL to develop technology for the delivery of a UK national active

debris removal mission, a mission we are certain will change the paradigm, in particular for the Low Earth Orbit population. We have also engaged the service sector to embrace how sustainable operations attract investment and insurance services and are pleased to see the positive impact that operating under a responsible regulatory regime has on attracting these vital services to the industry.

Chair,

We are delighted to host the Secure World Foundation Space Sustainability Summit on 22-23 June this year at the London Science Museum. This summit will showcase the global drive to ensuring a sustainable space environment for future generations. The Summit will bring together key players from across the globe who can together work in partnership to take the action needed to protect the future of the space environment, for example on issues such as orbital capacity, space traffic management, space debris mitigation and lunar governance.

Chair,

The UK believes that space has an important contribution to make to the Sustainable Development Goals – the SDGs. To support the implementation of the SDGs, the UK Space Agency's award-winning initiative, the International Partnership Programme, has used the UK space sector's capabilities in satellite technology and data services to develop space-enabled projects in partnership with developing countries. Through a portfolio of 43 grant-funded projects benefitting 47 countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America it has developed over 30 innovative space solutions to tackle development challenges such as climate and disaster resilience, food security, maritime safety, health, and education and created important new space partnerships between the UK, other countries, and international organisations.

Chair,

The UK would like to highlight some of its key space projects announced this year.

The UK engineering firm Rolls-Royce is developing a uniquely deployable, safe, and autonomous nuclear Micro-Reactor for use in the space domain. This technology will power the safe generation of water, breathable oxygen and rocket fuels for human Lunar, Martian exploration missions and is equally suited for use on Earth.

In addition to this, MDA UK are developing a 3D map for spacecraft landing on the Moon as well as spacecraft rendezvous and docking in low Earth orbit and geostationary orbit.

The UK has also been proud to contribute to the continued success of the James Webb telescope with the Mid-Infrared Instrument achieving its operating temperature in April.

Chair,

Finally, Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, we look forward to a productive session. You have the UK's full support in furthering joint cooperation and dialogue in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

UK statement on space and climate change at the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)

Chair,

The UK was proud to assume the Presidency of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), in partnership with Italy, last year.

More than one hundred countries signed up to the Global Methane Pledge where countries agreed to collectively slash methane emissions by 30 percent by 2030. This outcome means the goal of preventing global temperatures from rising more than 1.5 degrees is still alive.

Science has repeatedly told us that the impacts of letting temperatures rise beyond 1.5C will be devastating. This is why COP26 was so crucial, the world acknowledged that the cost of inaction far outweighs the cost of action.

There was also a landmark pledge by over 100 leaders to end deforestation by 2030 and space has a key role to play here. The UK led on a session highlighting how we can use satellites to measure the storage of carbon in the world's forests. Furthermore, the UK is proud to be a part of the ESA Biomass project which aims to provide the first comprehensive measurements of global forest biomass. The UK believes it is critical that climate data from space agencies is shared to address this issue and we must work collectively to resolve it.

The UK also showed a demonstration of the Climate Risk Index Tool which delivers risk assessments based on satellite and climate data to help the insurance sector provide vital financial products to those at risk from droughts and wildfires.

At COP26, the UK partnered with Space4Climate and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data to host the 'In Space We Trust' event which gave a platform to speakers from indigenous groups and countries across the globe such as Vietnam, Colombia, and Cabo Verde. It showcased existing partnerships using space for climate action and climate data capacity building, in collaboration with developing economies.

Chair,

As part of our advocacy for global co-operation, the UK is working in partnership with UNOOSA to address the information gap for space related climate actions.

Following its announcement at COP26 in 2021, UNOOSA is currently finalising the report of a UKSA funded Strategic Mapping Exercise related to existing international efforts, using space technologies to support climate adaptation, mitigation, monitoring, and resilience.

The aim of this exercise is to develop a strategic view of which organisations are actively coordinating space and climate activities and, through this, increase coherence across the multilateral system and relevant international organisations such as Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), Earth Observing System (EOS), Group on Earth Observation (GEO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Additionally, the UK is looking forward to the UN-Austria Symposium in September this year where parties will share experiences and best practices to adapting to climate change.

The UK were delighted to lead sessions at the World Space Forum and gave a speech on empowering climate action with space technology, data, and people. We emphasised the importance of space assets as a unique and invaluable tool to monitor climate change. We also promoted the idea of space data management in a format which is suitable for global models and national action.

Chair,

The UK has highlighted Earth observation data as a priority to tackle climate change challenges. The valuable information from Earth observation satellites helps people understand the global, regional, and local changes, to adapt to, and mitigate, the devastating effects of climate change around the world. It will help inform the decision making from planners needing climate risk data such as heat waves to emergency response to floods.

The UK are proud to collaborate with ESA on the Copernicus and TRUTHS missions to further the field of Earth Observation. This is a UK-led satellite climate mission to provide radiometric measurement of the Sun and Earth with unprecedented accuracy to contribute to climate modelling. TRUTHS will create a space-based climate observatory and not only make measurements itself, but also improve the performance of other Earth observation missions through cross-calibration and will enable the 10-fold improvement in accuracy of data.

Furthermore, the UK is proud to be part of the build, calibration, and science of the MicroCarb mission with France which was announced at Paris COP25 and we will continue to keep the Committee informed of its progress going forward.

Chair,

The UK has funded an innovative project by the National Centre for Earth Observation and Ordnance Survey which will use satellite data to monitor and

map heat in locations at the greatest risk from climate change. The UK hopes this will provide meaningful insights for policy makers to manage the impacts of climate change in hot spots in the UK and globally.

The UK is looking to become a signatory of the Charter for the establishment of the Space for Climate Observatory. The UK already has a national coordination of government, industry and academia developing trusted climate services – the Space4Climate network, so it is logical to help coordination at the international level.

The UK believes it is imperative that we work across borders to forge trusted partnerships, learn lessons from each other, and maximise utilisation of technology and data to drive climate action.

Finally Chair,

The United Kingdom is looking forward to taking part in the ambitious COP27 in Egypt later this year and looks forward to making further progress on climate change action.

Thank you for your kind attention.

UK Statement on Space ‘2030’ at the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)

Chair, distinguished delegates,

The UK was very pleased to see the Space ‘2030’ agenda agreed at the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) plenary last year. The UK would like to highlight important aspects of Space 2030 and update the Committee on actions the UK has taken in these areas.

Space plays a significant role in the lives of everyone on Earth due to the benefits brought by space applications including; satellite communications, meteorology, remote sensing, navigation, environmental monitoring, and surveillance.

We are all aware of the tangible benefits space offers for the effective delivery of public services.

In this regard, the UK has invested in air quality monitoring programmes such as Hyperspectral Imaging for Air Quality and Compact Air Quality Spectrometer by the University of Leicester.

With better remote sensing and better air quality data, local authorities

will be equipped to take decisions in the interest of citizen health. Effective interventions can reduce adverse health effects associated with poor air quality, and thus reduce emergency hospital admissions for air quality-related emergencies and the associated cost.

The UK would like to highlight its National Space Innovation Programme which supports the development of innovative products, services and technologies that have application in the space sector. This programme is in its second year and this year has focused on UK collaborative projects with international partners.

This includes research from the University of Cambridge into high resolution thermal infrared space telescopes for globally monitoring the energy efficiency of buildings and infrastructure which makes them a powerful tool for monitoring that governments, companies and even individuals are on track to meet internationally agreed carbon emission goals.

Chair,

Last year we released our National Space Strategy which emphasised our commitment to ensuring that the space environment remains safe and sustainable.

The 4th Summit for Space Sustainability will be hosted by the Secure World Foundation and the UK Space Agency on the 22nd and 23rd June, at the Science Museum in London. This will be a unique gathering of global stakeholders from government, industry, and civil society. It will focus on developing solutions for space safety and sustainability, bringing together key players who can together enact change and protect the future of space. At the Summit the UK will set out our commitment to space sustainability, how we will drive ambitious long-term change, and deliver the commitments within our National Space Strategy.

Chair,

Space debris is a significant global issue as a satellite collision could disrupt many of the critical services we rely on every day. The UK is investing in its national Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) capabilities to help mitigate the risks posed by space debris. By tracking objects in space, we can warn of potential collisions and in some cases satellite operators can manoeuvre their spacecraft out of the way.

Government users already receive SST information from our expert UK Space Agency orbital analysts based at the Space Operations Centre. This year the UK Space Agency is rolling out pilot collision avoidance services to commercial operators of UK licensed satellites as part of a project called 'Monitor your satellites'.

Furthermore, in 2021 we announced £1 million of grant funding for three space companies, Surrey Satellite Technology, Astroscale and Clearspace, to explore the feasibility of a UK-led mission to remove debris from space. We will be continuing to the next mission phase by down-selecting two projects in July

2022.

Chair,

In September 2021, the UK published our severe space weather preparedness strategy. This sets out a 5-year vision for boosting our resilience to the risk of severe space weather events. It includes how we plan to work with international partners on mitigating the potential impacts of extreme solar activity.

We are investing in programmes to improve our ability to forecast, mitigate and understand the impacts of extreme space weather events, to detect and track objects in orbit and to develop technologies and processes aimed towards reducing the risk of collisions in orbit.

Chair,

The UK recognises that technical standards play a key role in enabling technology innovation within industry and we play an active role in developing the international standards key to future technologies. We also understand that space is becoming increasingly congested, and this will only worsen. Uncontrolled growth will severely affect future space operations; hence, greater coordination becomes necessary to ensure that spacecraft are able to operate safely while avoiding physical collisions, radio-frequency interference, and other hazards. To address this, the UK is working with NASA and JAXA to develop a Space Traffic Coordination standard through the ISO.

The UK has supported the Faraday Digital Programme which will provide a global LEO ultra-wideband communications and processing infrastructure which can be used by third parties to develop, test and deploy a substantial range of applications and services. The Faraday Digital service will provide an in-orbit infrastructure which can underpin the new space revolution and provide the ability to upload and deliver new services from space on timescales of weeks instead of the traditional three to five years.

The UK is proud to continue its partnership with Australia with the UK-Australia AgroClimate Space Programme (E04AgroClimate) which uses satellite remote sensing data, technology and modelling capabilities to enable farming in both countries to become climate resilient while supporting the commitments to cut emissions.

Finally, the UK looks forward to working in partnership to deliver the aims of Space 2030 and address international challenges through the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Planning permission granted for footpath improvement work on lower Otter valley

Press release

Work to raise the height of a popular public footpath west of the Lower Otter Restoration Project site is due to begin in August 2022.



Aerial view of the Otter estuary

Image credit: Kor Communications

- Planning permission has been granted to raise the level of a popular public footpath
- Work will improve the footpath surface
- Footpath will be lifted above the level of most high tides
- Work will result in a circular route away from roads

The newly approved works do not affect the South West coast path.

The 900 metre long footpath to the west of the floodplain of the River Otter, which runs from the entrance to the existing Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club on Granary Lane to South Farm Road, will be raised by up to 1 metre to a consistent level. This will take it above the level of most tides, ensuring access is maintained in most circumstances.

FABLink had previously been granted planning permission by East Devon District Council to raise the footpath, but this had lapsed. The Council has now agreed to an amendment to the Lower Otter Restoration Project (LORP) planning permission to enable the Environment Agency to carry out these footpath improvements.

The work will result in an improved surface to the footpath, making it more accessible for people with mobility difficulties and more of an all-weather/season route. The unsightly overhead electrical cables which

currently are located west of the valley are also to be removed and the cables located within the new raised footpath. In doing this, the Environment Agency is facilitating a programme of work spearheaded by the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Western Power Distribution to remove overhead cables from sensitive areas of the landscape.

If the footpath was not raised it would flood about 300 times a year. Raising it will reduce the number of times when the water is at or above the surface of the footpath to approximately 20 times in a year.

Dan Boswell of the Environment Agency said:

The footpath improvements should result in a safer, more accessible and all-season, route and we look forward to handing this pathway back to the community so that they can enjoy the wildlife which will inevitably be drawn to the new intertidal habitat.

I would like to thank footpath users for their patience with the footpath closure. We have wanted to minimise the impact of work on users of the valley, keeping footpaths open for as long as possible and providing alternative route during closures. Unfortunately, we have not been able to do this at this particular location and the footpath will need to remain closed for the duration of the LORP project work.

The Lower Otter Restoration Project is primarily funded by the UK government, but also receives funding as part of the €26 million Promoting Adaptation to Changing Coasts project, which also has a similar scheme underway in the Saône Valley in Normandy, France.

Published 9 June 2022