

PM meeting with Taoiseach Micheál Martin: 10 November 2022

Press release

The Prime Minister spoke to the Taoiseach Micheál Martin today at the British Irish Council.



The Prime Minister welcomed the Taoiseach Micheál Martin to Blackpool as the host venue for the partners of the 38th British-Irish Council.

He expressed his commitment to working closely on matters of shared interest, and to deepen UK-Irish ties, particularly in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine and the associated energy crisis.

The Prime Minister set out the UK government's decision to introduce legislation to provide a short extension to the period for Executive formation and reiterated his firm commitment to upholding the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its dimensions.

On the Northern Ireland protocol, the Prime Minister stressed that the UK's strong preference is for a negotiated solution with the EU. He reiterated that any deal must solve the full range of issues caused by the protocol but hoped for flexibility and pragmatism.

Published 10 November 2022

UK aid funding open to Oxfam

Oxfam can once again bid for UK aid funding to carry out lifesaving work around the world, Minister for Development Andrew Mitchell announced today

(Thursday 10 November).

A pause was put on the charity bidding for funding in 2021 while an external investigation was carried out into safeguarding allegations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Since then, the charity has made significant improvements to its safeguarding systems in DRC – this includes the appointment of a national safeguarding advisor, a new network of safeguarding experts who work across their offices and respond to concerns, and training for staff on how to report a concern.

These measures are all in addition to other actions taken by Oxfam since 2018 to improve their overall safeguarding approach.

UK Minister for Development Andrew Mitchell said:

Oxfam has made significant improvements to how it deals with safeguarding, including introducing more effective preventative measures.

However, we are not complacent. We want to encourage reporting and a robust but sensitive response in every case, ensuring more reporting and better responses to cases. All providers of aid must have practices in place to make sure that safeguarding is always put first and foremost in planning and operations.

In February 2018, the Charity Commission announced a statutory inquiry into Oxfam, following safeguarding allegations in Haiti. Oxfam voluntarily withdrew from bidding for new UK aid and the pause remained in place since, apart from a short period in 2021. Oxfam has since invested in and expanded its safeguarding function and increased oversight by appointing their first Ethics and Integrity Director to uphold standards across the organisation. It has also introduced mandatory safeguarding training for staff working around the world.

Since 2018 the UK has made huge progress in tackling abuse in the sector and used its convening power and funding to improve safeguarding standards, identify perpetrators and support survivors and victims.

This includes backing a tougher screening system, which allows charities to share data about staff misconduct and stop perpetrators moving from job-to-job, working with Interpol and the UK's ACRO Criminal Record Office on Project Soteria to improve criminal records checks and promote information sharing between aid and law enforcement agencies. It has also launched a £10 million [Resource and Support Hub](#) to support aid organisations operating on the ground to improve their safeguarding standards.

Manor of Northstead: Kate Green

News story

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has this day appointed Katherine Anne Green to be Steward and Bailiff of the Manor of Northstead.



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Unlicensed security operatives caught and sentenced following enforcement checks

Press release

On Friday 4 November 2022, a security operative pleaded guilty at Dudley Magistrates' Court to working illegally.



Security Industry Authority

Finlay Caw of Bridgnorth was fined £300 and required to pay £500 prosecution costs plus a £34 victim surcharge to be paid within 14 days.

Friday's sentencing is the latest in a series of prosecutions brought by the SIA (Security Industry Authority) as a result of an inspection and enforcement operation with West Mercia Police last year. During the operation the SIA carried out checks in venues across Telford, Shrewsbury, and Wolverhampton.

SIA investigators found Caw working at Wolverhampton Racecourse on 27 November 2021. Caw worked unlicensed on seven occasions. He falsely claimed to SIA investigators that he was working under a licence dispensation notice as his employer was an approved contractor.

Caw failed to engage with the SIA throughout the resulting investigation.

The SIA prosecuted another security operative in Dudley earlier this year after he was found working without a valid licence during the same enforcement operation.

Stephen Dion of Wolverhampton entered an immediate guilty plea for working without a licence. He was sentenced to a 12-month conditional discharge, fined £135 as court costs and ordered to pay £22 victim surcharge on 15 June 2022.

On 22 October 2021, SIA investigators at The Buttermarket nightclub in Shrewsbury found Dion working without a licence. During the investigation they discovered that he had worked without a licence on 14 occasions over a three-month period.

Dion was interviewed by the SIA under caution and denied any wrongdoing. Dion later pleaded guilty in court.

Jenny Hart, one of the SIA's criminal investigations managers said:

The sentencing of these two operatives is yet another reminder of the damage working without a valid licence can cause individuals and their companies. Moreover, by working without a valid SIA licence, Caw and Dion knowingly put the safety of the public at risk. They exploited the trust that the public has in trained SIA licence holders and have now incurred fines and criminal records.

Notes to editors:

- By law, security operatives working under contract must hold and display a valid SIA licence
- [Read about SIA enforcement and penalties](#)
- The offences that are mentioned above are as follows:
 - Finlay Caw: Private Security Industry Act 2001, section 3 – unlicensed security operative; Private Security Industry Act 2001, section 22 – false information
 - Stephen Dion: Private Security Industry Act 2001, section 3 – unlicensed security operative

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the [Private Security Industry Act 2001](#). The SIA's main duties are the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority or to sign up for email updates visit: www.gov.uk/sia. The SIA is also on [LinkedIn](#) [Facebook \(Security Industry Authority\)](#) and [Twitter \(@SIAuk\)](#).

Published 10 November 2022

[Report by Head of OSCE Mission to Moldova: UK response, November 2022](#)

Thank you, Mr Chair, and welcome Ambassador Keiderling to the Permanent Council. Thank you for your report.

Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine has had a significant impact on Moldova, the region and globally. Moldovans have shown generosity and hospitality to more than half a million refugees, including around 90,000 who remain in the country. To echo President Sandu's words, Moldova is living the reality of a devastating war at its borders. A war that is killing innocent people in Ukraine and endangering regional stability and European Security. Russian missiles targeting Ukrainian infrastructure have infringed Moldovan airspace and territory and, because of the war, Moldova is going through a major energy crisis with winter looming. Gazprom's decision to reduce supply of gas to Moldova is unjustified and appears to be designed to cause hardship to citizens on both banks of the Nistru river.

Ambassador, we thank the OSCE Mission for your continued efforts in

monitoring the Security Zone and we underline the importance of freedom of movement of Mission members in order to carry out this important function.

We agree with your assessment of the importance of ongoing talks between Chisinau and Tiraspol and thank the Mission for its support to, and facilitation of, 1+1 meetings. With citizens on both sides of the Nistru united in their desire for peace and security, the current situation provides grounds for optimism that we might soon see movement towards a settlement of the conflict which respects Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, and with a special status for Transnistria.

The Mission's 'Conflict Prevention and Resolution programme' remains vitally important, including on confidence building measures and preventing and reducing tensions, as well as monitoring and investigating efforts. We regret that there have been, again, no developments in the withdrawal of illegally deployed Russian troops and ammunition. We once again call on Russia to remove its forces stationed in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova without host nation consent, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolutions. And we call on Russia to urgently formulate a proposal for resumption of the process of removal and destruction of ammunition from the Cobasna site. The continued presence of the ammunition at the site is a concern and is due to Russia's refusal to engage over many years. Russia would bear the responsibility for the human and environmental tragedy that would ensue in the event of an accident.

Ambassador, we echo your call for the sides to work towards full implementation of the "Berlin-plus package", including on number plates, telecommunications and access to farmlands. We are pleased by the Mission's continued efforts on Women Peace and Security including through skills enhancing workshops with members of the Joint Expert Working Groups. We encourage a continued focus on the human rights situation on both sides of the Nistru, particularly with regards to freedom of expression on the left bank. We echo your concerns about the amendments introducing criminal liability for complaints made against Transnistrian authorities, which will discourage the filing of complaints, not only to the Moldovan authorities but also to international institutions. We support your ongoing work to ensure access to justice for victims of gender-based violence, including human trafficking and other serious and organised crime.

The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting Moldova in its reform agenda. We welcome OSCE's participation in the Anti-corruption Working Group of the Moldova Support Platform, which the UK is pleased to co-chair with our Romanian colleagues under strategic direction of the Moldovan authorities.

Finally, Ambassador Keiderling, I would like to thank you for your strong leadership during your initial few months. I also thank the Mission staff, as well as Special Representative Mayr-Harting, for their dedication and professionalism during a difficult year. The United Kingdom will continue to support you and the Mission in fulfilling your mandate and to support peace and stability for the people of Moldova over the coming year and beyond.