

PM urges parties to restore power-sharing institutions on visit to Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland power sharing institutions must get back up and running so that they can start delivering on the issues that matter for the people of Northern Ireland, the Prime Minister will tell party leaders this week.

Delivering a “tough message” in private meetings on his first visit to Belfast since the Assembly elections, the Prime Minister is expected say that – while the UK government will “play its part to ensure political stability” – any action to fix the Protocol must result in all parties coming together to form an Executive and Assembly.

Drawing on his time as Mayor of London, he will say that there is “no substitute for strong local leadership”. Legislators must “get back to work” so that they can deal with the “bread and butter issues” like supporting families with the cost of living, cutting covid backlogs and fighting crime.

In his meetings with party leaders, the Prime Minister will also guarantee the delivery of three pre-existing commitments to Northern Ireland in the “coming weeks” including:

- Taking forward the Language and Culture Package agreed as part of the New Decade, New Approach.
- Intervening to deliver abortion regulations and place a duty on the Department of Health, so that women and girls have access to services that are their legal right.
- Introducing new measures to deal with the legacy of the past, with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland setting out more detail in the coming days and weeks.

The PM will update party leaders on the UK Government’s discussions with EU leaders over recent days, in which the EU have confirmed that they will never change their current negotiating mandate.

He will tell party leaders “that we will always keep the door open to genuine dialogue” however “there will be a necessity to act” and protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement if the EU does not change its position.

The PM will make clear that the government has never suggested scrapping the Protocol. There will always have to be a treaty governing the UK’s relationship with the EU in respect of Northern Ireland in order to prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland and protect the integrity of the EU single market.

Instead, the Protocol needs to be reformed so that it delivers on its initial objectives to protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its

dimensions.

He will say that there is “no disguising the fact” that the delicate balance of the Agreement has been upset by the Protocol, because one strand of the Agreement (North-South) has taken precedent over another (East-West).

This undermines the text of the Agreement, which makes clear that all strands are of “interlocking and of equal importance”. It has eroded the historic economic bonds which link Great Britain and Northern Ireland and resulted in the Unionist community feeling like its aspirations and identity are threatened.

The UK and EU’s “shared objective” should be for a reformed Protocol to enjoy “the broadest possible cross-community support” when it faces a consent vote in 2024, he will say.

Bathing water season begins for 2022

The bathing water season started today (15 May) with the Environment Agency carrying out regular testing of water quality at designated bathing sites until the end of September.

High standards of water quality at swimming locations are important for people’s enjoyment of beaches and other beauty spots in England.

Throughout the bathing season the Environment Agency will issue warnings of any forecasted pollution risk on its [Swimfo Find a Bathing Water website](#). Signs are also put up at these swimming locations to inform bathers about any possible dips in quality as a result of factors like rainfall, wind and high tides.

In the autumn Defra will publish its classifications – Sufficient, Good, Excellent or Poor – for each designated bathing water site.

Since the 1990s, the Environment Agency has driven £2.5 billion of investment and facilitated partnerships to bring about the change needed to make our bathing waters a success story. The long-term trend for bathing water quality in England remains upward and overall quality is high. In 2021 99% of bathing waters achieved the minimum standard of Sufficient. Of these, almost 95% achieved the highest standards of Excellent or Good – the highest since new standards were introduced in 2015. But while progress has been made, there is still much more to be done to ensure cleaner and healthier waters for people to enjoy.

Environment Agency Chair Emma Howard Boyd said:

Before the pandemic, coastal tourism in England generated £13.7

billion, supported 10,000 tourism related jobs, with 15 to 20 percent of employment in coastal locations linked to tourism – in some places over 50 percent. Public confidence in bathing water quality is key to the tourism industry as well as people's health and wellbeing. We monitor sites and provide pollution risk forecasting at over 170 sites throughout the bathing water season so people understand the local situation.

Targeted regulation and investment over several decades on the coast have driven significant improvements to bathing waters, but there is work to do inland. Water companies, industry and farmers need to meet regulatory requirements or face legal action, and there are small steps we can all take to help. For example by never flushing away wet wipes or plastic products like nappies so they don't end up in the water.

Designation does not guarantee clean water for swimming. Bringing rivers up to bathing water standards will be a challenge and places greater responsibility on farmers, water companies and communities to remove pollution that is harmful to swimmers. The EA is calling on them to play their part and working hard with all those who want to be part of the solution.

And individual actions count: small steps such as not pouring fats and oils down the sink or flushing wet wipes and other plastic products down the loo can help to protect water quality.

Knowing more about bathing water quality and the range and location of designated sites can help people get the most out of their visit. The EA's [Swimfo: Find a Bathing Water](#) website provides immediate access to information on over 400 designated bathing waters and notifies bathers when Pollution Risk Warnings have been issued. including coastal locations, inland lakes and the newly designated section of Wolvercote Mill Stream at Port Meadow in Oxford.

[Statement on Strengthening Anticipatory Action in Humanitarian Assistance – G7 Foreign Ministers, May 2022](#)

BACKGROUND

Humanitarian needs are at a record high. Crises and conflicts, climate change

impacts and disasters are increasingly threatening the lives and livelihoods of millions of people – trends exacerbated by the impacts of COVID19 and Russia’s unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. For the humanitarian system to continue to be able to protect affected populations, to bridge the growing financing gap and protect hard-won development gains, a paradigm shift towards more efficient, effective and forward-looking humanitarian assistance is needed.

Building on the commitments made in the G7 Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crisis Compact adopted by the G7 in London and the High-Level Event on Anticipatory Action in New York in 2021 and based on our shared understanding of the critical importance of preventing and mitigating human suffering and reducing needs before they occur, we, the G7, commit to making the humanitarian system as anticipatory as possible.

We acknowledge the significant efforts underway to address the increasing impact of climate change and will strive for maximum coherence and synergies between humanitarian assistance and climate action as agreed in the Paris Agreement, including through the key contribution of anticipatory action to averting, minimizing and addressing the risk of loss and damage associated with climate change impacts. We seek to maximize synergies with the work on climate risk within the G7 development track. We furthermore welcome and support the UN Secretary-General’s target to have within the next five years, everyone on Earth protected by early warning systems against increasingly extreme weather and climate change. We recognize the importance of the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative (CREWS) in achieving that goal. We look forward to seeing the action plan to be prepared by the World Meteorological Organization at the COP27 in Egypt.

We note with deep concern the growing problem of global food security and nutrition, further aggravated by Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. In a present where the risk of famine remains a real threat, it is imperative to lay the groundwork for the adoption and scaling-up of anticipatory mechanisms in order to facilitate early action and prevent the worst. We acknowledge the important complementary efforts of the G7 Food Security Working Group.

OUR COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE POTENTIAL OF ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Anticipatory action is defined as acting ahead of predicted hazards to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold. This requires pre-agreed plans that identify partners and activities, reliable early warning information, and pre-agreed financing, released predictably and rapidly when an agreed trigger-point is reached.

We commit to maximize the potential of anticipatory action to facilitate joint planning and more timely action, through improved collaboration also beyond the humanitarian system. This includes leveraging efforts on, inter alia, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, early warning, preparedness, social protection, and disaster risk and climate financing, and capacity strengthening and participation at all levels – local, national, regional, and international. To slow the growth in humanitarian need,

important linkages need to be made to the progress on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, climate finance, and the ongoing G7 Workstream on Climate and Disaster Risk Finance, including in conflict and protracted crises, promoting the use of prearranged risk financing within anticipatory action. We therefore commit to strengthening the enabling environment for anticipatory action and improving collaboration and working across silos.

Countries experiencing conflict and protracted crises are amongst the most vulnerable to climate change with limited capacity to absorb shocks and to develop disaster risk management structures to enable anticipatory action. Our joint commitment to strengthen the approach of anticipatory action must entail efforts to increasingly apply it in situations of protracted crisis and conflict where natural and climate change-related shocks are exacerbating conflict-related needs. Although the current focus of our commitments is on natural and climate related shocks, we must continue to improve our understanding of the role anticipatory action can play in mitigating the humanitarian impact of other shocks, particularly given that the majority of humanitarian needs result from man-made hazards like conflicts and violence.

Well-established and functioning disaster and climate risk management structures and systems are important to deliver effective anticipatory action. In humanitarian settings in which these systems are not fully functional, international efforts will be required to both strengthen capacity and complement existing efforts in order for anticipatory action to evolve. We therefore stress the need for our continued support to build and strengthen national, regional and local disaster and climate risk management structures and systems where they are weak in order to support scaling up anticipatory action in these situations.

SCALE-UP AND EMBED ANTICIPATORY ACTION IN THE HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM

While traditional humanitarian assistance remains essential in conflict and disasters, anticipatory approaches allow us to act before disaster strikes and crises fully unfold, before lives and livelihoods are lost. We, the G7, therefore reaffirm our commitment to advocate for, scale up and systematically mainstream anticipatory action into the humanitarian system, particularly for countries with well-established disaster risk reduction infrastructure in place.

We commit to support the integration of anticipatory action into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle as well as development planning and national adaptation plans, in order to develop and strengthen structures, systems and capacities that enable early action and building in areas of high disaster risks. In this regard we also commend UNDRR's important recommendations and checklist on Scaling up Disaster Risk Reduction in Humanitarian Action 2.0.

We commit to support, strengthen and increase the availability of quality forecasting data on risks, including both hazards and projected needs to improve early warning systems and risk analysis. This includes jointly designing and developing innovative risk analytics, thresholds, triggers, and modelling for anticipation as well as investment in coordination and

infrastructure to allow for data and model sharing to multiply knowledge, evidence and experiences of anticipatory action. We commit to support this, inter alia, through the UN's Complex Risk Analytics Fund (CRAF'd) and the Index for Risk Management (INFORM).

Evidence shows the crucial role of local actors for successful implementation of anticipatory action. They best understand local vulnerabilities, needs, capabilities and barriers to participation, allowing for an inclusive response. Acting ahead of crises provides stronger opportunities for more locally-led action. We commit to support local communities, civil society and authorities in the relevant countries to play a leading role in climate and disaster risk analysis and management, data-collection, preparedness and programming.

We commit to the inclusion and participation in anticipatory action and the empowerment of marginalized and vulnerable communities, groups, and individuals in anticipatory action. We recognise that gender, age, ability, ethnic and religious identity, displacement status and sexual identity overlap with social, cultural, and economic barriers to inclusion in anticipatory action. We believe that strong anticipatory action is action that recognizes all people as agents of change, and mitigates the risks of gender-based violence, discrimination and inequalities.

Collective learning, coordination, and partnerships are the basis for driving the anticipation agenda including further building and disseminating a strong evidence base at all levels. We commit to support this, inter alia, through initiatives like the Anticipation Hub, the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership and the Global Network Against Food Crises.

INCREASE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Funding must be made available on a larger scale and in a flexible and predictable manner to build and fuel anticipatory action where appropriate, ensuring actors and protocols are in place to allow for anticipatory measures to be implemented when triggered.

We, the leading donors of the humanitarian system, strive to significantly increase our financial support in anticipatory action programming. This includes pre-positioning funding, inter alia, within humanitarian organisations, in pooled funds and pertinent financing instruments. Mindful of their particular vulnerabilities and challenges, we will focus our efforts on protracted crises and conflict-affected situations.

We will utilize existing financing instruments and seek new financing solutions to deliver on our commitments, expanding anticipatory action in the framework of existing funds, particularly for countries with established disaster risk reduction infrastructure in place, but also through new financing solutions. In support of the diversity of humanitarian funding instruments, we seek to increase support to existing instruments, such as pooled funds like the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) as well as to the Start Network's Start Funds and Start Ready. We further call for the expansion of this approach to the

Country-Based Pooled Funds where appropriate. We will further explore how disaster risk finance can be made more anticipatory, using forecasts to trigger payouts rather than releasing funds from risk pools based on modelled impacts.

We will put a specific focus on financial instruments that address local leadership, communities, and systems in anticipatory action, so that anticipatory action programs are informed by local context, knowledge, and risk assessments, are embedded in local structures, and continue to strengthen the capacities of local communities and national systems.

In the spirit of accountability and transparency, we strive to develop ways to better track and report on our humanitarian funding of anticipatory action. To this end we commit to develop a methodology that improves our understanding of how much funding is going to anticipatory action and opportunities to increase it. This commitment builds on efforts begun by the G7 Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crises Panel and can be informed by the work of the Centre for Disaster Protection. Using a shared methodology, we seek to establish a baseline of our individual funding and subsequently report on our financial support to anticipatory action in the future.

[Action Plan on COVID-19 – G7 Foreign Ministers, May 2022](#)

Press release

G7 Foreign Ministers and the High Representative of the European Union endorsed an Action Plan on COVID-19 at the Foreign Ministers meeting hosted in Germany in May 2022.



We, the G7 Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, and the High Representative of the European Union, have endorsed the following Action Plan:

Much has already been achieved by our efforts to end the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022, with global vaccine supply now rapidly accelerating. However, there remain significant gaps in the global response to the current health crisis. Challenges remain to address equity in this COVID-19 pandemic and future pandemic preparedness. As G7, we have a particular responsibility to work with implementing countries and economies to help address these gaps. Given the wide ranging impacts of the pandemic, Foreign Ministers have a crucial role to play in ensuring that comprehensive, cross-cutting and swift action is taken.

Our contribution as Foreign Ministers to the overall G7 engagement in Global Health in 2022 will focus on jointly addressing gaps in the global COVID-19 vaccination campaign, including in critical 'last mile' contexts and with a focus on vulnerable groups, expanding emphasis and support for frontline health workers and necessary equipment. In line with other G7 initiatives, we will work with countries and the international community to begin planning for the ongoing COVID-19 response for 2023 and beyond to help build political commitment for preparedness for the future.

This effort aligns to the WHO Global Vaccination Strategy and the commitment taken by G20 at the Leaders' Summit in Rome in October 2021. To this end we commit to:

VACCINES

- Continue to accelerate our efforts to ensure equitable and rapid global distribution of safe, effective, quality-assured and affordable vaccines as well as access to complementary diagnostics, therapeutics, and other essential health products in line with country needs by:
 - Contributing to finance and support, by all means, the efforts of ACT-A and its COVAX platform, particularly in low- and middle income countries. The G7 have already provided and pledged 18.33 billion USD for ACT-A, of which 12.36 billion USD fall to the COVAX vaccine pillar including GAVI, CEPI, WHO and UNICEF.
 - Where needed and available, sharing additional doses of safe and effective vaccines, with no political strings attached, and using responsible practices in vaccine donations. The G7 have already donated 1.18 billion doses and stand ready to share additional doses, based on the needs and capacities of countries and the necessity to have a global optimal allocation of vaccines (procured by COVAX directly or through donations).
- Closely coordinating with manufacturers, COVAX, regional organizations and recipient countries and economies at all levels to support effective donor coordination efforts, and to optimize production rhythm and further improve the sharing process, better align delivery timelines with country needs and capacities and address issues such as shelf life and to increase transparency and visibility and phasing of planned deliveries.

VACCINATIONS

- Working with governments, the COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership and

other relevant stakeholders to support 115 countries in need, particularly LICs, with 3.95 billion USD to address logistical, planning as well as human resources challenges on the “last mile” to ensure that vaccines become actual vaccinations, including by:

- Supporting countries with syringes and other ancillary equipment;
 - Providing evidence-based training on the safety and efficacy of vaccines; and build capacity for front line health and care workers, expanding the frontline healthcare workforce;
 - Building trust in public institutions and combatting mis- and disinformation on the ground through engaging with communities and tailored information campaigns, based on scientific and factual evidence;
 - Improving logistics through public-private partnerships (cold chains);
 - Improving coordination of concrete measures on the ground among donors and implementing agencies in order to avoid duplication and create synergies between different activities, guided by the WHO and other relevant multilateral actors involved, as appropriate;
 - Integrating measures within strengthened health systems to ensure COVID-19 vaccine delivery does not weaken other critical health measures, but rather reinforces national immunization systems;
 - Supporting national and sub-national campaigns towards the 70% target, prioritizing coverage among health and frontline workers, the elderly, and the immunocompromised.
- Leaving no one behind in our global vaccination campaign by putting a special focus on historically marginalized and vulnerable groups, especially refugees, rural communities, and women and girls, particularly those living in crisis or in humanitarian contexts, and calling for the full operationalization of the COVAX Humanitarian Buffer, a valuable measure of last resort to reach the most vulnerable communities and humanitarian settings.
 - Protecting front line health care workers and sustainably strengthening national health systems, e.g. by supporting detection and surveillance capacities at all levels.

VACCINE PRODUCTION

- Increasing sustainable local and regional production capacities in developing countries, through partnerships for voluntary technology transfers on mutually agreed terms and other relevant forms of support with an emphasis on supporting sustainable long-term capacity building for safe, effective and quality-assured COVID-19 vaccines, as well as wider vaccine and essential medical needs such as anti-virals, allowing us to be flexible to respond to this and future pandemics.
- We therefore commit to supporting a diversified global vaccine production by supporting capacities in low and middle income countries through sharing knowledge, expertise and financing.

We will closely coordinate with other like-minded partners, international and UN organizations as well as multilateral and regional initiatives to pool our efforts. G7 Foreign Ministers recognize the criticality of responding to the

COVID-19 pandemic, and in parallel building global health security capacity and architecture for the future.

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[Statement on Climate, Environment, Peace and Security – G7 Foreign Ministers, May 2022](#)

Press release

Foreign Ministers of the G7 countries issued the following joint statement on Climate, Environment, Peace and Security following the conclusion of their Foreign Minister Meeting in Germany.



We, the G7 Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, and the High Representative of the European Union, who are united in our resolve to keep the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C in reach, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and to reach net zero emissions globally by mid-century:

Building on The Hague Declaration on Planetary Security, the Berlin Call for Action on Climate and Security and the work of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security in New York, we intend to work with like-minded partners to establish a “Climate, Environment, Peace and Security Initiative”. This group will advocate for and undertake concrete and operational actions, approaches and solutions to help tackle climate and environmental risks for peace and stability across the world. To that end, this declaration sets out a seven-point agenda for action to advance timely and effective responses to the risks posed by climate change and environmental degradation to stability and peace by:

1. Aligning our policies and practices as a whole-of-government response to better understand and address peace and security implications of climate change; to fulfil the Paris Agreement and outcomes thereunder, including the Glasgow Climate Pact, as well as international environmental commitments, and conserve or protect at least 30 percent of our land and oceans by 2030, including terrestrial and inland waters and coastal and marine areas, notably pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C and to halt and reverse biodiversity loss;
2. Supporting those states and regions whose stability and peace are most affected by climate- and environment-related risks; mobilizing climate and biodiversity finance, while promoting resilience, gender equality, conflict prevention, peace and capacity-building in affected regions. This includes scaling up finance for adaptation in line with the Glasgow call to at least double the collective provision of adaptation finance from 2019 levels by 2025, in the context of achieving a balance between mitigation and adaptation in the provision of scaled-up financial resources, recalling Article 9, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement;
3. Improving resilience and adaptation in the face of climatic and environmental change (and the wider security, economic, humanitarian, environmental and societal challenges it creates) globally by bringing climate security and environmental risk assessment, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and nature-based solutions into the heart of our operations, in addition to mitigation efforts, and utilizing data-driven, science-based, and comprehensive multisectoral approaches/analytical insights;
4. Collaborating to improve operational responses to support stability and peace by firmly integrating climate change and environmental degradation and their impacts into early warning, mediation, peace-keeping and other peace support operations, in order to promote resilience and to avoid a vicious cycle where climate change and environmental degradation worsen drivers of conflict, which in turn increases vulnerability to climate change and environmental degradation impacts;
5. Sharing experience and expertise (internationally and across national and subnational government departments) to shape and deliver coordinated policies and practices that are inclusive, context and conflict-sensitive, gender-responsive, and tailored to local conditions and needs of stakeholders;
6. Advancing coherent and complementary approaches around climate, environment, peace and security and facilitating multilateral collaboration, for example through a regular meeting of supporting actors from governments and international organizations to civil society and the private sector, for example at the Berlin Climate and Security Conference;
7. Assuring that the risks to stability and peace posed by climate change biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, as well as climate mitigation and adaptation, are raised to the highest levels of government.