

News story: Scotland to pioneer future of global oil and gas industry

Andrew Jones, Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, will speak at the oil and gas industry's largest conference – Offshore Europe – which begins in Aberdeen today (5 September).

Cleaning up and dismantling old oil rigs and pipelines – known as 'decommissioning' – must be carried out by all operators once they have finished extracting oil and gas in the UK. The North Sea is one of the first regions in the world to start decommissioning on such a large scale.

As oil fields mature across the world, the minister has said there is opportunity for the UK to become pioneers in this area. He believes the sector should develop this expertise and sell it to the world.

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Jones MP, said:

The UK oil and gas industry supports 300,000 jobs, and with up to 20 billion barrels of oil yet to recover, has many productive years ahead. As the need for decommissioning grows, we must seize the opportunity to cement the UK as a world-leader in this field and export this knowledge globally.

Efficient decommissioning means big changes to the oil and gas industry – requiring new technology, skills and innovative approaches. This will ensure that decommissioning is safe and cost-effective while also protecting the environment.

Chief Executive of The Oil and Gas Authority, Andy Samuel, said:

Decommissioning presents great opportunities for innovation and the development of UK skills and capability. We are working closely with operators and service providers and are already seeing some great performance in cost efficient decommissioning, new collaborations and technology trials. This bodes well for the shared target of 35% cost reductions and the considerable domestic and export value that can be realised.

The UK's head start on cleaning up the North Sea means that 10% of old oil and gas facilities have already been removed – and in the next ten years alone, more than 100 platforms will need to be scrapped and over 1,800 oil wells plugged.

The Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) forecasts that UK oil and gas operators will spend almost £60 billion on decommissioning between now and the 2050s.

To ensure this industry thrives, conditions must be right. The government provides tax relief on decommissioning which covers around 40% of the total cost for UK companies – forecasted to be worth around £24 billion between now and the 2050s. The OGA have also pledged to reduce the overall cost by 35%. Taken together, these measures will help companies make the best of decommissioning, creating new opportunities, advancing technology and generating more jobs.

The UK has already started to see large decommissioning projects that demonstrate new ways of doing things and push technological boundaries, including Brent (Shell), Murchison (CNR) and the Southern North Sea (ConocoPhillips).

[Press release: £40m cash injection to benefit lives of young people](#)

Youth organisations will receive £40 million to boost the skills and life chances of young people living in disadvantaged areas, Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch announced today.

The money is set to benefit 300,000 young people, providing new opportunities for them to get involved in their communities, support their personal development and get the skills and confidence they need to enter the workplace.

It will be used to create new youth clubs in rural areas, expand sports projects to build the confidence of young people encouraging them to get active and increase services providing support and guidance to young people.

The Youth Investment Fund – made up of government and National Lottery players money from the from the [Big Lottery Fund](#) – will be shared by 86 youth organisations in East London, Liverpool City Region, West Midlands, Tees Valley and Sunderland, Bristol & Somerset and Eastern Counties over the next three years.

Minister for Civil Society Tracey Crouch, said:

This investment from the government and National Lottery players will have a transformational effect on the lives of some of our most disadvantaged young people. It will help thousands who might otherwise have gone under the radar flourish. Local voluntary and community youth organisations already do so much fantastic work and this £40 million will enrich the lives of many more young people throughout England.

Dawn Austwick, Chief Executive, Big Lottery Fund said:

The Youth Investment Fund is a welcome boost for the many great community organisations that work with young people locally. Money raised by National Lottery players creates opportunities for young people to build on their talents and strengths and the Youth Investment Fund is an important part of the jigsaw for the youth sector.

Examples of projects that will receive funding to better the lives of young people in their area are:

[Youth Federation](#): The Liverpool-based charity will receive £749,664 to improve youth provision across Wirral, Halton and St Helens. Youth Federation aims to reach out to nearly 5,000 local young people, providing coding and digital skills to increase their employability and improve mental health through sport.

[Kite Trust](#): Cambridgeshire LGBT charity will be awarded £193,554 to create four safe spaces for 600 young people to receive advice and support on issues such as isolation. The charity will also develop and implement an education and corporate training programme for schools and businesses in the region to promote equality and inclusion.

[SkyWay](#): Located in Hackney, the charity delivers a wide range of activities and programmes in youth clubs, sports centres, parks and house estates. It will use £407k in funding to improve its offer to young people by buying new equipment such as cooking utensils, arts and crafts kits and sports equipment, that will be used in support sessions. It will also increase the number of young people being trained as young leaders, a programme that is currently oversubscribed at Skyway.

The fund will allow the chosen organisations to expand the services they provide to young people, and sustain them over the coming years.

The [New Philanthropy Capital](#) and the [Centre for Youth Impact](#) will work alongside each of the 86 organisations to evaluate the impact of their work with young people.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

- For more information please call the DCMS press office on 020 7211 2210
- The Youth Investment Fund is equally funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Big Lottery Fund.

- The Big Lottery Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It puts people in the lead to improve their lives and communities, often through small, local projects. It is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by National Lottery players for good causes. In 2016/17 it awarded £712.7 million and supported more than 13,814 projects across the UK for health, education, environment and charitable purposes. Since June 2004 it has awarded £8.5 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people.
- Breakdown of the bidding [criteria](#) (PDF, 88.6KB, 4 pages) .
- The fund will be given to organisations in East London, Liverpool City Region, West Midlands, Tees Valley and Sunderland, Bristol & Somerset and Eastern Counties. These areas were chosen based on measures of deprivation, to make sure that the funding reaches areas of greatest need

Press release: PM meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir: 4 September 2017

The Prime Minister held a short meeting at Downing Street with the Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir earlier today.

They discussed a range of bilateral and regional issues, including the ongoing isolation of Qatar in the Gulf region, with the Prime Minister reiterating her call for all sides to take steps to de-escalate the situation and restore Gulf Co-operation Council unity at the earliest opportunity.

They also discussed Saudi Arabia's "Vision 2030" programme for reform and modernisation. The Prime Minister noted its focus on transformation, innovation and empowerment and said that the UK looked forward to continuing to work closely with Saudi Arabia on this ambitious project. She hoped that Crown Prince Muhammed bin Salman would be able to visit the UK in the near future to build on the historic partnership between the two countries.

Finally, they discussed Yemen, the need to bring the conflict to an end, and the continued importance of demonstrating compliance with international humanitarian law.

Speech: UN Security Council holds emergency debate on North Korea

Thank you Mr. President,

This is the sixth time that the Security Council has come together to condemn a nuclear test by North Korea. It's the sixth time that the world has held its breath. North Korea is the only country in the 21st century to have conducted such tests, against all international standards of behaviour.

In addition, we have met many times in recent months following other North Korean provocations, most recently, just last week in response to its reckless missile test over Japan. Yesterday's nuclear test explosion was by far the largest yet. Combined with the increasing range of its missiles, North Korea poses a threat not simply to its region but truly to global peace and security. This latest test has been rightly condemned already by most of the governments represented here today.

UN Security Council debate on North Korea

We have passed eight sanctions resolutions on North Korea. The country is subject to the most stringent sanctions currently applied by this Council. Yet still North Korea continues to put its illegal missile and nuclear programmes ahead of international law, international security and the will of this Council. This is a disturbing and unprecedented situation. Rarely has a state remained so defiant in the face of overwhelming international condemnation, and repeated, powerful rounds of sanctions.

It is clear that existing sanctions applied by the Security Council on North Korea are having an effect. In particular, the measures against commodity exports and the financial sector, applied since 2016, are making it harder and harder for Pyongyang to acquire the hard currency necessary to fund its programmes. Each day that gets harder still, thanks to the efforts of many states around this table.

Those who doubt this impact need only read the statements coming from the North Korean regime. They rail against the sanctions that we have placed upon them. But it is also clear that DPRK is uniquely willing to put their illicit programmes ahead of the wellbeing of its people. Those people suffer appalling repression, and struggle even to feed themselves. The leadership of North Korea has chosen this path of defiance at great cost

Faced with this unique threat to international peace and security, the Security Council must condemn this test and the entire North Korean nuclear and missile programme.

We continue to wish for a peaceful way forward. Dialogue will always be our

end goal. But returning to dialogue without a serious sign of intent from Pyongyang would be a set up to failure. North Korea must change course to allow a return to dialogue. Were they to do so, the opportunity exists to end this crisis. Until that moment, we must stay the course on sanctions, and continue, as the Secretary-General has called for, to present a united front.

I said when we met last week that the United Kingdom believed a new UN Security Council Resolution was required in response to North Korea's dangerous and illegal test flight of a missile over Japan. In light of yesterday's nuclear test, our resolve to act has increased still further. We must increase the pace of implementation of existing sanctions and work rapidly towards the adoption of a new and effective Resolution.

While continuing to enforce the measures this Council has already agreed, we should go further by taking steps to sever the funds on which the regime relies in order to pursue its illegal and destabilising programmes. We should not least further restrict the unethical exploitation of North Korean workers overseas.

Mr President, North Korea has created a deeply dangerous and unstable situation. The United Kingdom will work with our partners on this Council and beyond to tackle the challenge. I urge all states to join us.

[Press release: UK Government statement following Welsh Government EU Exit meeting](#)

First Secretary of State Damian Green said:

The talks today were conducted in a constructive spirit and were a step in the right direction.

We both agree that it is vitally important to protect the internal UK market and to avoid making things more difficult and expensive for Welsh companies doing business across the UK.

To achieve this we will need to adopt a UK-wide approach on certain issues. The next step is to discuss those areas that need a common UK approach for the good of businesses and consumers in Wales and across the United Kingdom.

It is critical that work starts now.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

More powers will certainly come to Wales as part of this process and that will be an important incentive in pushing us towards an agreement.

There is a significant job of work to be done and we must keep focus on the outcomes we want to achieve.

We will keep talking and I am confident we can reach an agreement that works for all parts of the UK.