

# Dialogue is key to improving stability for Israelis and Palestinians: UK at the UN Security Council

Thank you Madam President, and my thanks to the Special Coordinator for his briefing today.

Let me start by once again reinforcing the need to prevent a return to the violence we witnessed in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories last year. We share concerns about the escalating tensions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. We must all work to take steps to avoid exacerbating tensions. In this regard, we welcome the announcement by the Israeli Police Commissioner that there will be a pause on demolitions in East Jerusalem during Ramadan.

We are concerned about the rise in security incidents and violence in the OPTs, including the death of nine Palestinians this month by Israeli security forces' live fire. Where there are accusations of excessive use of force, we advocate swift, transparent investigations.

Israel has a legitimate right to self-defence. In exercising this right, it is vital that all actions are proportionate.

We welcome the dismantling of West Bank outposts by the Israeli authorities, including Moaz Esther, Givat Habaladim and Battir. The violence from settlers against Israeli security forces during the operations is inexcusable. Outposts are illegal under international law and Israeli law, and are an obstacle to peace.

Madam President, as we celebrated International Women's Day this month, we were reminded of the importance of ensuring equitable access to a quality education for all children and the power of educating girls as a tool for peace. We continue to urge the Palestinian Authority to pass the necessary legislation to protect and progress women's rights. And we reiterate our strong support for UNRWA and their vital work to help Palestinian refugee children, including girls, fulfil their potential.

The UK remains focussed on work to improve the economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza. We welcome the beginning of the electronic-VAT pilot, and ongoing work between the parties towards a more efficient tax system. The UK encourages both parties to continue to make progress on other priority fiscal issues, and to reconvene the long-stalled Joint Economic Committee, in order to enhance dialogue on economic issues.

Finally, as we look towards the convergence of religious holidays next month, the UK strongly discourages unilateral actions that may increase tensions. We reiterate our support for the historic Status Quo in the Old City of Jerusalem – that is the best means of preserving the right to peaceful

worship for the three Abrahamic faiths.

It is only through dialogue that we can improve stability across the region and build the foundations for peace. The UK remains firmly committed to a two-state solution, based on 1967 lines, and with Jerusalem as a shared capital.

Thank you, Madam President.

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## [Trade Remedy Authority instructed on steel safeguards measures](#)

News story

The Secretary of State for International Trade has 'called in' the TRA's reconsideration of its review into the steel safeguard trade remedy measure.



The Secretary of State for International Trade has today, 22 March 2022, 'called in' the TRA's reconsideration of its review into the steel safeguard trade remedy measure.

This call-in marks the first use by the Secretary of State of new powers established under the Trade Remedies (Review and Reconsideration of Transitioned Trade Remedies) Regulations 2022. 'Call-in' means the Secretary of State has assumed responsibility for this reconsideration and its outcome. The Secretary of State's letter calling in the reconsideration and setting out instructions to the TRA can be found on the [reconsideration public file](#).

The TRA has been asked to conduct additional analysis at an aggregated level of steel products. This will supplement the analysis at individual product categories in the original review that regulations dictated. The Government believes that analysis at an aggregated level may better reflect the integrated nature of the steel industry, where developments affecting one product also have an impact on others.

DIT have also announced the [call-in today via a gov.uk notice](#) and published a [Written Ministerial Statement](#).

Call-in powers have been established as part of the ongoing review of the UK trade remedies framework announced on 30 June 2021 which aims to ensure that the TRA and government collectively have the abilities to defend UK industries from unfair trade practices and promote rules-based free trade. You can find out more about these powers and the review [here](#).

The TRA has worked closely with the Department for International Trade in preparing for this call-in and looks forward to supporting the Secretary of State in completing the reconsideration, which is due to be completed by 30 June 2022.

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## [PM call with Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tarik al Said: 22 March 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to the Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tarik al Said this afternoon.



The Prime Minister spoke to the Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tarik al Said, this afternoon.

He thanked the Sultan and the Government of Oman for their invaluable assistance in securing the release of British nationals Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Anoosheh Ashouri from Iran, highlighting it as an example of the UK and Oman's successful and enduring partnership.

The leaders shared their deep concerns about the brutal Russian offensive in Ukraine, agreeing that attacks on civilians must be stopped. They discussed

efforts to improve global energy security in the wake of the crisis, including by boosting our existing cooperation in renewable energy and green technology.

The Prime Minister and Sultan Haitham bin Tarik also discussed regional security issues, including the conflict in Yemen, and committed to further develop UK-Omani cooperation in defence, investment and trade.

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## **MOD Honours the sacrifice of World War One soldiers during re-dedication services in Ypres**

Both services were organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), also known as the 'MOD War Detectives', and were held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) Ypres Reservoir Cemetery in Ypres, Belgium.

Nicola Nash, MOD JCCC caseworker said:

"After more than 100 years, these four men who were lost, have now been found. There is nothing more rewarding for us than giving a family closure and making sure that every soldier is remembered as he should be."

The first service was held for Lance Serjeant (LSjt) Edward Leonard Cottrell and Serjeant (Sjt) Joseph Frank Brookes Birkin whilst the second was to honour Lance Corporal (LCpl) Wilfred Horace Miller and LCpl Arthur Burton. All four served with the Leicestershire Regiment.

Serjeant Joseph Frank Brookes Birkin

Defence Minister Leo Docherty said:

"We will never fail in our duty to remember those who gave their lives in the cause of freedom during the two world wars. As more fallen servicemen from both world wars are discovered, the MOD Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre will strive to confirm their identities. Their tireless efforts and dedication will ensure these soldiers' names will live on in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's cemeteries."

The four soldiers had no known graves since tragically losing their lives in 1915, however, due to the collective efforts of the MOD JCCC and CWGC

following evidence submitted, their final resting places have now been found over a century later.

Private Benjamin Nicolas laying wreath on behalf of members of the Birkin family who were unable to attend

Following submission of research, including from the CWGC, that was considered by the MOD JCCC as the adjudicators, additional research by the team themselves and the National Army Museum led to the four cases being confirmed.

Nicola added:

“Today, we honour those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, along with representatives from the regiment and their family.”

John Williamson, great nephew of Sjt Birkin, said:

“It is wonderful this work still continues; this ceremony gives final closure to the family.”

Birkin family members in prayer during the service

Research by MOD JCCC also led to LCpl Miller’s family being traced meaning they could be invited to today’s service to pay their respects.

Maria Miller, great niece of LCpl Miller, said:

“This has been the most humbling experience and a great privilege to be here today.”

Maria Miller at the graveside of her great uncle Lcpl Miller’s headstone

The services were supported by the Royal Anglian Regiment and were conducted by the Reverend (Captain) Thomas Wilde, CF, Chaplain to the Royal Anglian Regiment, who said:

“When you give a soldier a name you give them meaning a history and a voice.”

The graves will now be marked by headstones provided by the CWGC.

Fergus Read, CWGC Case Officer (Commemorations), said:

“It is always immensely satisfying when we are able to put a name on any headstone. Here, the research for one case helped us to unlock the names of those buried in a further three graves. It is the Commission’s privilege to be part of the work to identify the last resting places of these casualties, and to care for their graves in perpetuity.”

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## National Highways to set out new system for connected and autonomous plant at Futureworx event

National Highways will be unveiling a new industry-wide scoring system for Connected and Autonomous Plant (CAP) to construction bosses at the Futureworx event next week.

Visitors to the industry event will be given the first look at the new CAP levels which will score machinery according to its level of automation. This standardised measure, the first of its kind, will offer clarity and a clear way to compare different types of machinery to suit different tasks.

The system is the latest development in the CAP Roadmap launched by National Highways and i3P jointly in June 2020 which identified challenges and workstreams to support a goal of making automation business as usual in construction by 2035.

The new CAP levels will establish a common language and a first of its kind framework to enable connected and autonomous plant to be specified and deployed on construction schemes.

This means that all construction clients, like National Highways, can communicate clear expectations to suppliers and manufacturers can describe capability of their products using the same language.

National Highways Head of Innovation Annette Pass said:

Connected and autonomous plant offers a real opportunity to revolutionise the construction sector by making work safer, quicker and brings significant benefits for the environment.

Futureworx is the perfect platform to showcase our new CAP levels which will further our ambitious plans to introduce more connected and autonomous plant onto sites as we continue to develop the roads of the future.

CAP has the potential to improve productivity by more than £200bn by 2040 in the construction sector and we are committed to making it standard industry practice. By establishing more collaborative relationships with innovators and academics we hope to continue to lead in this field.

The term Connected and Autonomous Plant refers to construction plant that is connected to its environment through sensors or wireless transfer of data

between a remote operator while the autonomy element refers to aspects of the vehicle's operation and also movement around a site.

The new CAP Levels Maturity Matrix offers a standardised scoring system that enables plant and machinery to be scored according to its level of automation.

An example of currently available technology is Intelligent Machine Control which guides excavators to dig to precisely the right level and profile, meaning more efficient and easier working for machine operators. In future the operator may not need to be in the vehicle and could even control it from the other side of the world.

The roadmap and the CAP levels have been developed in collaboration with TRL – the UK-based global centre for innovation in transport and mobility – as well as i3P, Costain and over 75 industry stakeholders meaning they have been shaped by those who will be guided by them.

The ongoing digital revolution in the construction industry can increase productivity dramatically and generate billions of pounds in savings. At the same time, digital transformation can reduce disruption to the public and improve safety.

Digital technologies are increasingly being introduced in construction and opportunities arise to introduce new techniques such as automating some activities that require manual labour and human intervention but also involve risk.

National Highways' [Digital Roads strategy](#) sets out:

- the company's Digital Roads 2025 vision for safer and greener roads
- how the growth of digital technology and the move to electric, connected and autonomous vehicles will fundamentally change roads in the future.

The Futureworx technology showcase is taking place on 30 and 31 March 2022 at the East of England Arena, Peterborough.

Futureworx will bring together industry professionals keen to find out what is in the pipeline of ideas and technology which will shape tomorrow's construction equipment experience. The two-day event will also include conference sessions, live product demonstrations and technical talks.

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.