

Abductions of journalists and local government figures in Ukraine: UK statement

Press release

The UK's Minister for Europe and North America has issued a statement following reports of abductions in Ukraine.



Minister for Europe and North America, James Cleverly said:

Russia must immediately release all illegally-detained persons in Ukraine and we call on Russia to end its egregious violations of human rights.

We condemn those responsible for the reported abductions and abuse of Ukrainian activists, human rights defenders, volunteers, journalists, health-care workers and government representatives in the areas of Ukraine under control of the Russian army.

Gross violations of Ukraine's democratic sovereignty cannot be tolerated. Local politicians and civil society actors are fundamental to a democratic society and it is contemptible that Russia has taken steps against them.

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Addressing the ongoing humanitarian situation in Yemen

Thank you Mr President, and thank you SRSG Grundberg and USG Griffiths for your valuable and sobering briefings today.

Hans, the UK warmly welcomes the launch of your consultations with the parties this month. We commend your inclusive approach, which invites the views of a wide range of Yemenis, and we encourage all parties to engage constructively in line with their obligations under resolution 2624.

I would like to thank Council members for their efforts in the adoption of that resolution. It imposed, for the first time, an arms embargo on the Houthis as a whole and explicitly denounced the "Houthi terrorist group". This is vital as we witness continued cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia and the UAE, including last Thursday's attack on a Saudi oil refinery.

It is important to highlight that resolution 2624 was also clear in its support for the continued maintenance of humanitarian access and commercial imports of food, fuel and other essential civilian commodities into all Yemen's ports. The Council has not targeted humanitarian activity or trade.

Resolution 2624 also called for the immediate return of all US and UN staff to their families and for Houthi withdrawal from the US embassy. The United Kingdom strongly condemns the detention in February of an additional US staff member. We also call for the Houthis to release British National Luke Symons.

As we've heard from Martin today, across Yemen, the conflict continues to have a devastating human toll. The evidence from the IPC, and from today's briefing, is clear: Yemen is experiencing drastically deteriorating food security. As seven million Yemenis risk starvation in 2022, and the numbers of those in famine-like conditions is expected to increase five-fold, the Yemen Pledging Conference convenes tomorrow in need of \$4.27 billion. The United Kingdom calls on all donors, including those in the region, to step up.

Finally Mr President, I would like to end on a hopeful humanitarian note, by welcoming the signature this month of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Houthis and UN regarding the transfer of oil from the Safer tanker, as Martin briefed us. This is an important step; we must now all act together in support of the initiative.

Thank you, Mr President.

Defence Secretary meets NATO Defence Minister in Brussels

News story

The Defence Secretary Ben Wallace met NATO Defence Ministers today (16 March) to reaffirm the United Kingdom's support for Ukraine and commitment to NATO



Defence Secretary Ben Wallace alongside his NATO counterparts in Brussels

The extraordinary meeting of Defence Ministers was called by the Alliance's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in response to President Putin's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and the wider security issues for the region.

NATO Defence Ministers addressed both the immediate crisis and the longer-term adaptation of NATO's defence activities. Priorities include demonstrating the Allies' support for Ukraine, the ongoing humanitarian crisis, and the importance of Allies spending a minimum of 2% of GDP on Defence.

During the meeting Defence Ministers agreed to continue providing significant military supplies to Ukraine including lethal and non-lethal aid. The UK Defence Secretary highlighted that the UK would be providing Starstreak, a high velocity anti-aircraft missile system, that complements the other military aid provided by the UK Armed Forces, including over 4,000 anti-tank missiles.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

The UK and our Allies continue to support Ukraine against Russia's invasion.

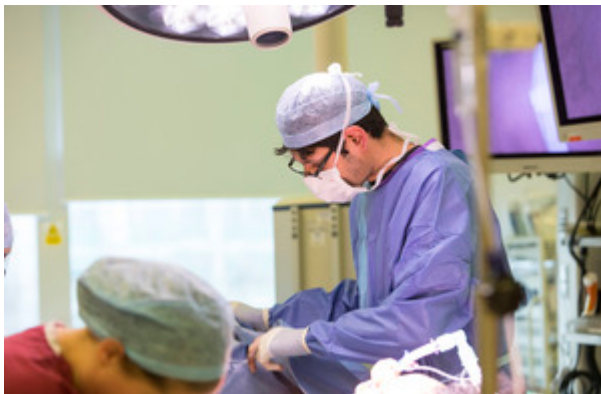
I have met with my fellow Defence Ministers today to discuss the next steps.

While in Brussels, the Defence Secretary also held bilateral or small-group meetings with the US, France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Canada, Slovakia, Sweden and the Czech Republic.

The UK has recently bolstered its military commitments in Eastern Europe including doubling the number of troops in Estonia, committing HMS Trent and HMS Diamond to the Eastern Mediterranean and providing air policing over Romania and Poland with RAF fast jets from the UK and RAF Akrotiri.

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[National Clinical Impact Awards: 2022 round dates](#)



From March 2022, the national Clinical Excellence Awards have been renamed the national Clinical Impact Awards. Our home page will be updated shortly to reflect this change.

The 2022 round of the national Clinical Impact Awards will open for applications on Wednesday 27 April, with registration for a new online application system opening shortly before.

Consultants and academic GPs wishing to apply for an award will be able to do so until Wednesday 22 June, with scoring and governance processes taking place throughout summer and autumn. Despite the later opening of the round than in 2021, the entire process will be completed at the usual time.

More details can be found in the updated [applicant guidance](#). Other guidance will be published shortly.

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Last updated 17 March 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 17 March 2022

Amended the last sentence to reflect the updated applicant guidance being published.

2. 16 March 2022

First published.

[‘Floodmobile’ to visit at-risk communities in Calderdale](#)

- The Floodmobile, a mobile home which shows people and businesses how they can better protect their properties from flooding, is visiting communities in Brighouse and Todmorden on Thursday 24 and Friday 25 March
- The mobile home showcases over 50 ways that people can increase resilience to their properties and reduce the risks of flooding
- Industry experts along with Environment Agency and Calderdale Council staff will be on hand to provide specialist advice on how to better protect homes and businesses from flooding

The Floodmobile, a specially adapted mobile home that showcases over 50 examples of different products that can better protect properties, will be visiting communities in Brighouse and Todmorden at the end of this month.

The mobile home aims to promote options for homes and businesses that will allow them to adapt to the increasing flood risks brought about by climate change. It is scheduled to make an appearance at the Tesco car park on Huddersfield Road, Brighouse, on Thursday 24 March, followed by the Aldi car park on Burnley Road, Todmorden, on Friday 25 March.

The Floodmobile highlights the need for property adaptation, particularly in flood-prone areas, which will also increase the likelihood of a quicker recovery following a flood. Examples of measures that can be installed include waterproof plaster, pumps, barriers, flood doors, non-return valves, self-closing air bricks, periscope covers, and recoverable kitchens.

Paul Swales, Senior Flood Risk Advisor at the Environment Agency said:

Sadly, we are experiencing an increasing number of storms as a result of climate change.

However, there is so much that people can do to protect themselves and their property from flooding. Some examples of these are highlighted in the Floodmobile.

We can't stop flooding altogether. That's why we urge local people to come along to these events to gain practical advice about how they can reduce the impact of flooding to their properties, and to explore the different measures available to become more resilient.

Cllr Scott Patient, Calderdale Council's Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Resilience, said:

With Storm Franklin still very fresh in the minds of Calderdale residents and businesses, we're pleased to welcome the Floodmobile to the borough. It's a practical way to help people prepare for future flooding, which is sadly very likely as we continue to live in a climate emergency.

The Council, the Environment Agency, many other partner organisations and communities are working hard to reduce flood risk, increase resilience and tackle climate change across Calderdale. Alongside this work, it's really important for local people to continue to be aware of the risks and have a flood plan to help reduce damage and disruption. This includes preparing homes using measures shown in the Floodmobile.

Mary Dhonau, a flood victim and campaigner also known as "Flood Mary" said:

I've been flooded on many occasions and it's an appalling experience. Many people are out of their homes for many months on end.

The Floodmobile displays the moves that can be taken to reduce the awful impact a flood can bring. It demonstrates just what can be done at a home or business level to either keep the water out, or reduce the damage and speed up recovery if it does get in.

I have travelled around the country talking to people who have 'built back better'. Their powerful and inspirational stories of being flooded one day and back home, or open for business the next, or not having to move out at all because of the moves they have taken have helped shape the content of the Floodmobile.

I encourage everyone who is at risk of flooding to visit us, we are looking forward to meeting everyone.

The Environment Agency, in partnership with Calderdale Council, is developing the Brighouse Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) to better protect 216 homes in the area. Members of the project team will be at the Brighouse event to answer any questions regarding the scheme.

For more information about the Brighouse FAS, please visit the [Eye on Calderdale webpage](#). You can sign up to receive updates about the scheme via email, please email 'subscribe' to BrighouseFAS@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The Environment Agency provides a Flood Warning Service to over 8000 properties and business in the Upper Calder Valley, which aims to provide residents and businesses with essential time to prepare for flooding and act immediately.

To find out if you are living in a flood risk area and for information about how to sign up for flood alerts and warnings, please [visit the Environment Agency website](#) or contact Floodline on 03459 88 11 88.