

# UK government and global businesses in new £20 million partnership to educate girls in developing countries

- to mark International Women's Day [8 March], Prime Minister Boris Johnson will launch a new global partnership with 11 businesses to improve girls' access to education and employment in developing countries
- the UK government is contributing an initial £9 million, with businesses providing £11 million in total
- the programme aims to provide high quality skills training to around 1 million girls around the world
- improving girls' access to education is a key part of the UK's foreign policy, to ensure we build back better from the pandemic and prevent a lost generation. Investing in education helps lift communities out of poverty and protects girls from early marriage, forced labour and gender-based violence

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is launching a new £20 million business partnership as the UK continues to lead global efforts to improve girls' access to education in developing countries.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of children did not have any access to school – and girls from disadvantaged families are particularly vulnerable to missing out on education, whether through poverty or prejudice. The pandemic has created even more barriers to education, with a peak of 1.6 billion children around the world having faced school closures.

In the UK's first education partnership of its kind, the UK government is joining forces with the private sector to boost girls' access to education in developing countries. Partners include Unilever, Pearson, PwC, Microsoft, Accenture, Standard Chartered, United Bank for Africa, Coursera, Vodafone, BP and Cognizant. The UK Government will be working in partnership with UNICEF's Generation Unlimited (GenU) to help deliver the programme, with key partners funding GenU being Accenture, Standard Chartered, Unilever, Microsoft, and United Bank for Africa.

Last night [7 March], a reception was held in No.10 Downing Street to mark the announcement and International Women's Day, which was attended by partners, including: Jill Huntley, Global Managing Director, Corporate Citizenship at Accenture; Dr Betty Vandenbosch, Chief Content Officer at Coursera and Marissa Thomas, Chief Operating Officer at PwC.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

The United Kingdom has long been a proud and mighty champion of this fundamental cause and today we take one leap further through

our first Global Partnership of its kind – opening the opportunity for one million girls across the developing world to have access to high quality skills training.

Ensuring every girl and young woman across the globe receives 12 years of quality education is the greatest tool in our armoury to end the world's great injustices.

Delivering on this mission will be one of the best defences against ignorance, ensure the greatest protection from prejudice and put a rocket booster behind our hopes and dreams for global development in the years to come.

Businesses, charities, schools and colleges will shortly be able to bid for funds from the programme. The partnership wants to support projects that will improve access to education for girls, with a focus on providing the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills needed to find work in key sectors such as technology and manufacturing. This could include funding new skills training programmes, improving teaching or redesigning training to make it more relevant to business needs. Initially bids will be encouraged for projects in Nigeria and Bangladesh, two countries where significant barriers to girls' education remain.

Funding from the programme will also help expand GenU's 'Passport to Earning' (P2E) platform. This digital skills platform will provide girls with free, certified education and skills training which they can then use to support future employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. UNICEF's precursor to P2E was listed among Time Magazine's 100 Best Inventions of 2021.

Some of the businesses involved will be contributing a range of resources including books, computers and other technology, mentors, advice and access to their networks, skills and training programmes. The private sector involvement will help ensure that education and learning opportunities provide girls with the skills for the future that employers need.

The UK is playing a leading global role to improve girls' education in developing countries. During the UK's G7 Presidency last year it secured agreement to help get an additional 40 million girls into school by 2026; and secondly to help 20 million girls to learn to read by the age of 10 by 2026. In 2021, the UK hosted a successful Global Education Summit, which raised \$4 billion in pledges from world leaders to support schools through the Global Partnership for Education. Between 2015 and 2020, the UK supported at least 15.6 million children in developing countries to gain a decent education, including 8.1 million girls.

We have already seen considerable success with similar skills programmes such as the Alternative Learning Program (ALP) in Bangladesh. This involved training up marginalised young girls with the skills they needed to be able to secure jobs within demand sectors, which gave these young girls more economic, social and personal freedom. As a result, the programme saw a 62% reduction in child marriage among the girls and families involved.

Similarly, the 'Educate!' programme across Uganda and Rwanda has provided industry-specific (agriculture and tourism) sessions for girls, as well as sessions to boost their literacy skills. This programme saw a 120% increase in income among the female participants.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Supporting women and girls is at the heart of UK foreign policy. We want women to have agency over their own lives and to be free to succeed.

Investing in girls' education is vital for a more sustainable, peaceful and prosperous future. That's why we are partnering with the private sector to help girls in developing countries access education and job opportunities.

Helen Grant, Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Girls' Education said:

Every girl everywhere deserves to have an education.

From school right the way through to the workplace, our partnership will help give women and girls the skills they need to reach their full potential.

Kevin Frey, Chief Executive Officer of Generation Unlimited said:

The Girls' Education Skills Partnership exemplifies the commitment of the UK government and the private sector in addressing the critical gap in skilling girls for 21st Century opportunities.

P2E is an innovative skills platform designed with partners to reach the girls everywhere, every time, preparing them with in-demand market relevant skills.

- the programme is called the Girls' Education Skills Partnership
  - the £11 million provided by businesses is a mixture of funding and resources
  - GenU (housed within UNICEF) will manage the funding that will be open for bids
  - the companies providing funding to GenU are Accenture, Standard Chartered, Unilever, Microsoft, and United Bank for Africa
  - seven countries have been identified for the Passport to Earning (P2E) platform: Brazil, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, Niger, Egypt and India
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# Putin is directing a campaign of violence and cruelty against civilians

Thank you, Madam President. And may I start by thanking, too, Martin Griffiths and Cathy Russell for their sobering briefings. I also want to add my thanks and appreciation for the work of your organisations, the courage of your staff, and the integrity of your reporting.

Madam President,

Martin, Cathy and Colleagues have already described in sobering detail the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. 1.7 million refugees – 1.7 million individual lives, destroyed. And the UN expects this to rise to 4 million in the coming weeks.

We've seen the devastation caused by Russian missiles and bombardment, including reports of cluster munitions in Ukrainian cities:

apartment blocks torn apart:

hospitals, schools, in ruins:

people left without electricity, food, water and shelter.

We can't turn the clock back.

Russia's invasion has been met with fierce resistance by the Ukrainian people. In response, President Putin is directing a campaign of violence and cruelty against civilians.

But let me be clear – we will hold Russia to account for its actions, and we will investigate thoroughly allegations of war crimes and violations of international law.

Madam President,

In response to this tragedy, the UK Prime Minister today announced a further \$130 million of aid, which brings to a total the UK's support for Ukraine, to \$520 million. In addition, individual members of the British public have given over \$130 million.

This is intended to help Ukrainians in need, and support neighbouring countries receive refugees.

But as I have said before, what the Ukrainian people really need is an end to this invasion.

So, we appeal to Russia to end their war before they bring even more tragedy to the Ukraine – and even more shame on their own nation.

Vassily Alekseevich,

The great Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote: "Man is given not only one life, but also one conscience."

I know that you've spoken under instructions today, but I ask you to report faithfully back to Moscow what you have heard today – the urgency of this Council's calls for peace.

I thank you.

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## Statement by the Governor of Turks and Caicos Islands on the Russian invasion of Ukraine

I thought it important to give an update on the UK's response to the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, and the support TCI is, and will provide, in terms of sanctions.

Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric attack against a sovereign democratic state. It is a clear breach of international law and the UN Charter. I spent some of early military career in West Germany, defending Europe from the threat of Soviet aggression, and to see columns of Tanks from Russia's 'First Guards Tank Army', bearing down on cities and civilians, in a democratic state, is unconscionable. Ukraine – who are standing up to this aggression with admirable courage – have already suffered horrific attacks – missiles and air strikes have torn through apartment blocks; innocent people including children have lost their lives.

Today (2 March) 141 Countries voted in the United Nations deploring Russia's invasion of Ukraine and calling for an immediate withdrawal of Forces. With the exception of Cuba that vote, deploring Russian aggression, included every Caribbean country. While thirty five countries abstained, only 5 voted against (Russia, Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea and Syria). Of the abstentions, six of Russia's allies, who voted with her after the annexation of Crimea in 2014, abstained today including – most notably in our region – Cuba.

It is the first time in 40 years the 'Security Council' has referred a crisis to the assembly and only the 11th time an emergency session of the UN general assembly has been called since 1950. . The initial General Assembly resolution was co-sponsored by some our closest neighbours: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago. Good for them.

Staying with our region, CARICOM (where our Premier presently is, representing TCI) heard the Chair, the Prime Minister of Belize, John Briceno say: "As we meet, Russia has invaded Ukraine. This is a flagrant violation of international law. We condemn in the strongest terms this unjustified invasion. There must be an immediate cessation of hostilities, an immediate and unilateral withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine. We call for all to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law."

The events of the last few days have demonstrated that the Kremlin was never serious about engaging in diplomacy – and was focussed only on deceit and furthering territorial ambitions. The Russian government lied not only to the world but crucially to their own people. This is not an argument with Russians, many of whom will deplore their President's actions, but with the small circle who control the Russian State, and who have enriched themselves on it. It is vital for the safety of every nation that President Putin's venture should ultimately fail, and be seen to fail. The UK stands with Ukraine – and I personally admire the defence the Ukrainians are mounting.

As families shelter from rocket attacks, and paratroopers drop on a Ukrainian city, and Tank columns are on the move, the number of refugees seem to be in the region of well over 500,000. From our perspective, in the Caribbean, it is worth acknowledging there were disturbing reports that suggested those with African or South Asian heritage or ethnicity were being discriminated against. The UK Government – and others in this region – have received absolute assurances from the Ukrainian Government that this is not sanctioned and will not be tolerated, and that all will be treated equally.

The UK means what it says in terms of defending the Ukrainian people's right to choose their own destiny. As a result it has launched the largest package of sanctions in the UK's history – sanctions that TCI have been, and are, also bringing into force. This is being implemented in partnership with our international allies in order to cut off funding for President Putin's war.

These will inflict serious economic pain and we have agreed with international partners that many of Russia's key banks will be removed from SWIFT (the foundational process by which money is moved between banks). This is the first step towards a total SWIFT ban. New sanctions will devastate Russia's economy and targets Vladimir Putin directly and his inner circle including Sergey Lavrov.

More than 100 companies and oligarchs at the heart of President Putin's regime have been hit with sanctions yesterday worth 100s of billions of pounds, asset freezes and travel bans on Russia's banking and defence sector. This includes asset freezes on VTB, Russia's second largest bank, worth £154 billion, Rostec, Russia's defence giant, responsible for \$13bn of arms exports per year. Sanctions will also soon be implemented on 571 members of the Duma and Federation council who sanctioned the invasion of Ukraine.

The UK have banned Aeroflot and all other Russian commercial and private jets from UK airspace and these airlines and private jets are equally banned from TCI airspace and all other Overseas Territories. The UK will be introducing new financial measures to freeze the assets of Russian banks and lay

legislation before the UK Parliament to ban the Russian state and Russia's economically vital industries and companies (like Gazprom) from raising finance on the UK's money markets – the most important financial centre in Europe.

This legislation will also prevent Russian banks from clearing payments in sterling, and as soon as it comes into force it will apply to Sberbank – Russia's largest bank. Additional legislation will ban exports to Russia across a range of critical sectors, this includes critical, high-end technological equipment. It will blunt Russia's military-industrial capabilities and act as a drag on Russia's economy for years to come.

Working with allies the intention is to cripple Russia's economic development in both the short and, if necessary, the long term. The UK and our allies are united and clear that nothing and no one is off the table. UK sanctions will also apply to Belarussian individuals and organisations that have supported the Russian invasion.

Beyond sanctions, we are already providing a range of economic, humanitarian and defensive military assistance. The UK have pledged £220 million of aid, which includes £120 million of humanitarian assistance providing Ukrainians with access to basic necessities and vital medical supplies. The funding will help aid agencies respond to the deteriorating humanitarian situation, creating a lifeline for Ukrainians with access to basic necessities. UK Government humanitarian experts have also deployed to the region to bolster the UK's support to countries receiving those fleeing the violence in Ukraine.

Having been one of the first to send sophisticated anti-tank weapons to the Ukrainians – to allow them a fighting chance to defend themselves – and watching them use these to good effect in defending their homeland, the UK continues to help Ukraine strengthen its defences with joint exercises, maritime support and by training over 20,000 members of its army.

The UK is ramping up support for trade in priority industries to £3.5 billion – including £1.7 billion to boost Ukraine's naval capability. We are also providing \$500 million in loan guarantees to support Multilateral Development Banks, such as the World Bank, to bolster Ukraine's economy. We particularly welcome Germany's decision to suspend Nord Stream 2 that brings Russian Gas to Europe. We must hold Russia responsible for their actions, which will be met with severe costs, and to do this Europe must reduce its dependence on Russian gas.

The Kremlin's unprovoked aggression has led the Russian people into a quagmire and, as demonstrated today, turned Russia into an international pariah. The world community now stands against them and in solidarity with Ukraine. The Russian government's attempt to conquer an independent state by force of arms, is an attack on the security and freedom of Europe but it goes far wider than that. It's an attack against the international order and its impacts, particularly if President Putin were to prevail, will be felt globally should dictators, and those who see themselves as the 'strong' set against weak neighbours, believe they can act with impunity. I'm proud of the

Ukrainians who are resisting, I'm proud to be associated with those supporting them, and I'm proud that TCI – in the only way it can – is supporting them through the imposition of sanctions against those who wage war against democratic neighbours.

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## PM call with the leaders of the France, Germany and the United States: 7 March 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to the leaders of the France, Germany and the United States this afternoon.



The Prime Minister spoke to the leaders of France, Germany and the United States this afternoon about the situation in Ukraine.

The leaders condemned Russia's barbaric action and expressed their ongoing solidarity with the people of Ukraine. They discussed the military and political situation on the ground and agree that any future negotiations on Ukraine's future would have to put the needs and wishes of Ukrainians first.

The Prime Minister and other leaders agreed to continue to apply pressure on Russia to isolate Putin diplomatically and economically. The Prime Minister stressed that our goal must be ensuring Putin's failure in this act of aggression against Ukraine.

The group agreed to continue meeting in this format in the days ahead.

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## UK largest bilateral humanitarian donor to Ukraine as UK, Canada and The Netherlands launch new Ukraine solidarity alliance

- The UK pledges extra £100m in aid, UK now the largest bilateral humanitarian donor to Ukraine.
- Builds on earlier announcement of \$100m (£74m) cash injection into Ukraine's economy and takes UK total offer of support to the current Ukraine crisis to around £400 million.
- 'International Ukraine Support Group' will coordinate the global community to deliver long-term support for Ukraine.
- New initiative follows the Prime Minister's six point 'plan of action' for the international community to ensure Putin fails in his ambitions.
- Separately – UK and Canada agree to strengthen bilateral cooperation across security, defence, trade, science, global travel health and climate sectors.

A landmark solidarity pact launched by the leaders of the United Kingdom, Canada and the Netherlands will mobilise practical and sustained support for Ukraine.

The new initiative – the International Ukraine Support Group – will bring together global partners committed to ensuring strong political, humanitarian, economic and defence support for Ukraine.

The group will mobilise international allies to coordinate and reinvigorate assistance to Ukraine – likely to be tested over time – to ensure efforts are sustained in the long-term. The trio will encourage more countries to join and the UK will be raising this with their partners.

Last week 141 countries voted to condemn Putin's war at the historic UN General Assembly vote. 39 countries – including the UK, Canada and the Netherlands – joined the largest referral to the International Criminal Court in history to expedite an investigation.

The UK, Canada and The Netherlands have been leading the way in their response to Ukraine's requests for help including issuing punitive sanctions and providing defensive military equipment.

At the same time, the UK is now the largest bilateral humanitarian donor to Ukraine. It comes as we commit another £100m in aid to Ukraine to save lives, protect vulnerable people inside the country and in the wider region and to tackle the growing humanitarian crisis. It will provide basic necessities including medical supplies.

It takes UK total offer of support to the current Ukraine crisis to around £400 million.

This includes the \$100m (£74m), announced yesterday, for the Ukrainian government budget to mitigate financial pressures created by Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion.

In today's press conference, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

As Ukrainians resist Russia's onslaught with courage and tenacity, the international community must aid their struggle in every way we can.

To aid these efforts, today the UK is joining our Dutch and Canadian friends to mobilise more practical and sustained support for Ukraine.

This is the moment for Ukraine's friends to create a coalition of humanitarian, economic and defensive military support to ensure that Putin fails.

The formation of the partnership commences a week of concerted engagement by the Prime Minister to drive the international community to ensure Putin fails in his ambitions, set out in his six-point plan.

On Tuesday, he will host leaders of the 'V4' group of Central European nations – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

Separately – the UK and Canada have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation across security, defence, trade, science, global travel health and climate sectors.

Under the commitment, the two countries will enhance deeper collaboration with respect to security and intelligence, including through Five Eyes, to better combat current and future threats to democracy. They will also strengthen cooperation on economic resilience, especially supply chains.

The pair will build on existing defence relationships which will protect and defend our shared interests in the Indo-Pacific. The UK's polar research vessel HMS Protector will visit Canada in the summer.

Negotiations will start for a new, ambitious, progressive free trade agreement between Canada and the UK and the two countries will work together to successfully complete the UK's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

A new UK-Canada Travel Health Dialogue will look at enhancing alignment on border and travel measures, and on how countries use global travel health policies in their responses to further variants and global health challenges.

The government will continue to work closely with the international community

to strengthen security and resilience, and make a renewed and concerted effort to ensure Putin fails in Ukraine.