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Our ref: TO2026/11693
Your ref:

18 June 2026

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Dear Peter Webster,

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 May to the Foreign Secretary about the policy resolutions adopted in March 2026 by the United Nations Association, London and South East region.

We continue to be grateful for the work of the UNA in building support for an effective United Nations. Having consulted widely across the FCDO and Whitehall, we are pleased to provide the following updates where you have called for UK government action:

Accountability for Ecocide

The UK has strong laws in place to protect the environment, and contravention of many of these is a criminal offence, with convictions being sought and high financial penalties imposed to punish significant or persistent environmental offending.

Whilst the Rome Statute does not currently recognise an international crime of ecocide, it does provide protection for the natural environment during armed conflict. Specifically, it criminalises, as a war crime, intentional attacks that knowingly and excessively cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment.

We are aware of the proposal to recognise ecocide as an international crime under the Rome Statute. There is currently no consensus on the definition of ecocide. However, we welcome the leadership shown by Pacific Island States on environmental issues and will consider this proposal in cooperation with all of our international partners.

Arms trade impact on women and children

The UK's arms export licensing regime remains among the most robust in the world. Licence decisions continue to be made on a case-by-case basis against the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria (the Criteria)¹, taking into account relevant

¹ <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-12-08/hcws449>

information and prevailing circumstances. Considerations of the risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women or children are included in four of the Criteria.

Among other points, the Criteria make clear that where there is a 'clear risk' that items might be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), a licence will not be granted.

We can and do respond quickly and flexibly to changing or fluid international situations. All licences are kept under careful and continual review as standard. We are able to suspend, refuse or revoke licences as circumstances require.

The Government provides compliance best practice and due diligence guidance to exporters through published guidance, compliance checks and export control engagement. Where an exporter shows a lack of compliance, they are referred to HMRC. HMRC works with Border Force and prosecuting authorities to undertake a wide range of enforcement activity, including seizures, compound settlements, warning letters and prosecutions².

It is not for the Government to determine the structure, composition or role of parliamentary scrutiny committees, these matters are for Parliament to decide.

BBC Charter Review

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport leads on the government's relationship with the BBC, on Charter Review and on BBC future funding. They will be best placed to respond to your broader concerns.

The FCDO leads on the relationship with the BBC World Service. FCDO Grant-in-Aid funding for the BBC World Service for the next three years is £148 million per annum. This is a positive settlement in challenging fiscal circumstances and reflects how highly we value the BBC World Service. It is a real terms uplift over the funding period. This means we have increased our contribution to BBC World Service funding by 42% – up from £104.4 million in 2024/25 when this government took office. The BBC has welcomed this settlement, which will allow the BBC to grow its audience reach over the period of the Spending Review.

On reporting from conflict-affected areas, FCDO funding has supported emergency pop-up services, which have been a crucial lifeline for communities affected by conflict and crisis, for example in Iran, Syria and Myanmar. The BBC is editorially and operationally independent.

The BBC Charter Review that was launched in December will look at potential BBC World Service funding mechanisms for the longer-term. The current Charter expires at the end of 2027, and a White Paper is expected to be published later this year.

You mention younger users of the BBC, and the importance of the BBC's reputation for trustworthy reporting worldwide. The BBC World Service objectives, priorities and targets, agreed with the FCDO, feature goals for increasing reach amongst women

and youth, and for maintaining the BBC's global leadership position on trust. Details can be found here: [world service licence.pdf](#)

Climate Crisis

At COP29, the Prime Minister announced the UK's ambitious and credible Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions by at least 81% by 2035, compared to 1990 levels, excluding international aviation and shipping emissions. This target aligns with the recommendation of the independent Climate Change Committee and is a signal of the Government's commitment to restoring the UK's global leadership on climate. The UK's 2030 NDC remains in place and represents a faster rate of reduction than is implied by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) median global pathways consistent with 1.5° of warming. The Government remains committed to meeting both its 2030 and 2035 NDCs and continues to bring forward policies in line with its Paris Agreement commitments, seeking to strengthen delivery and explore further measures where needed.

Countries in the Global South are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, and we are committed to partnering with them to address the climate and nature crisis. We are supporting faster and more ambitious reforms to the global financial system to channel more and higher quality climate finance, including adaptation finance. The UK's contribution of £40m to the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage reflects our commitment to rapidly establish an impactful facility which can help the poorest and most vulnerable communities respond to the devastating impacts of climate change. Overall, tackling climate change and nature loss will continue to be a priority for UK ODA programming, remaining at 20% of our ODA budget over the Spending Review. The UK is allocating around £6 billion of International Climate Finance (ICF) over the next three financial years. We will also deliver an additional £6.7 billion of UK backed climate and nature positive public finance. And we will use our public finance to mobilise billions more from the private sector.

The UK is also working with partner countries to implement Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) in South Africa, Indonesia, Viet Nam, and Senegal. The JETPs support partner governments' ambitious energy transition plans while mitigating the impact on the most vulnerable members of society for inclusive and resilient growth. For example, to date, the International Partners Group (IPG) have delivered 30 just transition projects totalling \$116m to create viable economic alternatives in coal-dependent regions in South Africa. Additionally, the UK has funded UNDP to develop a Just Transition Framework which has been presented to the Government of Viet Nam. In Indonesia, the UK has worked with UNOPs to pilot a similar framework. UK grants are funding the development of a Monitoring and Evaluation framework in Senegal to measure JETP progress and its impact on the most vulnerable groups, such as women and young people.

The Government is committed to setting stronger adaptation objectives to improve preparedness for climate impacts, supporting an ambitious fourth National Adaptation Programme (NAP) in 2028. To inform these objectives, we have requested advice from the Climate Change Committee on an appropriate planning assumption to shape our overall approach. The NAP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework will guide objective development and plans for implementation,

ensuring a more robust and transparent approach to tracking progress and outcomes. Further detail will be set out in the fourth NAP.

The Global Clean Power Alliance (GCPA) is a plurilateral alliance of Global North and Global South partners, bringing together high-ambition countries and actors across industry, private finance and international organisations to accelerate the global shift to clean power and strengthen UK energy security. It delivers impact through two tangible “Missions”, (i) the Finance Mission, with an overarching aim of mobilising clean energy finance and (ii) the Supply Chain Mission, working towards supply chains that are resilient, diverse and reliable. The Mission is focussed on tackling four specific barriers, across data, electricity transmission grids, circularity, and opportunities for Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs).

A core part of the GCPA approach is to co-develop practical ideas with partners. The Supply Chains Mission Vision, published at COP30, set out shared commitment to taking forward the ambitions of the Mission, supported by Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Kenya and Zambia, European Commission, COP30 Presidency and partnerships and input from the International Energy Agency, Utilities for Net Zero Alliance, and Chatham House. Since then, we have begun turning ambition into action by establishing delivery plans in technical working groups across workstreams. We continue to welcome any partner who would like to join either Mission. The Finance Mission has started to implement the five clean energy Action Plans announced at COP30 (with the African Union, Caribbean, Chile, Colombia and Mozambique) and is seeking to agree further action plans with international partners, with a view to finalising plans in 2026.

In the 2025 North Sea Future Plan, we set out details of how the Government will deliver on its commitment not to issue further oil and gas licences to explore new fields. The North Sea is a highly mature basin, and its natural decline would not be reversed by further licensing. New licences awarded in the last decade have made only an incremental difference to oil and gas production. Awarding new licences to explore new fields would have a marginal impact on the future production levels of oil and gas. The North Sea will be a vital resource for decades to come. We will introduce new ‘Transitional Energy Certificates’ to ensure existing fields can be managed for their full lifespan, whilst ensuring there is no new exploration for oil and gas in currently unlicensed areas.

A clean power system will be reliant on a range of technologies. Reliable low-carbon nuclear is needed alongside wind and solar generation to provide secure, baseload power. Nuclear also bring great economic benefits and supports tens of thousands of skilled, high paid jobs. Nuclear has an essential role to play in the future age of clean electricity, both in meeting clean power and accelerating to net zero.

The UK remains committed to driving forward global maritime decarbonisation. Multilateral action through the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which we are honoured to host in London, is critical for this. We welcome the continued development of the Net-Zero Framework and will work with others to progress it towards adoption this year.

Coalition of the Responsible

This Government remains committed to playing a globally significant role on international development, building modern, mutually beneficial partnerships to navigate global issues.

We must tackle climate and nature emergencies and global development challenges together, alongside promoting the economic growth needed to deliver opportunity for everyone.

We are working with partners at home and abroad to accelerate Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) progress through to 2030. To achieve this, we are resetting our approach, moving from donor to investor and supporting countries' own systems.

Meanwhile, support for international criminal justice and accountability is a fundamental element of the UK's foreign policy. The UK is a strong supporter of an effective International Criminal Court (ICC).

This is reflected in our practical support including: witness protection; sentence enforcement; commitment to the ICC's reform process; and in our work to ensure that the Court has the resources it needs to operate effectively.

The UK is one of the Court's major funders, providing support of £14.3m to the ICC's 2026 budget.

Companies breaching international law in arms trade

The Business and Trade Secretary is responsible for export licences. In his decisions he draws on advice from the Foreign Secretary, including with regard to compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

The UK's robust export licensing criteria states that the Government will not issue export licences if there is a *clear risk* that the items might be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of IHL.

We review all new licence applications on this basis. We also keep all our extant licences (which typically last for two years) under continual review.

HM Government takes its export control responsibilities very seriously and we operate one of the most robust and transparent export control regimes in the world. This is an important lever for promoting both UK prosperity and national and global security.

Exports of goods in contravention of our licensing controls is a serious offence – in recent weeks a company director received a substantial prison sentence for attempting to export military equipment to Hong Kong without a licence, following a successful prosecution by HMRC.

Comprehensive Accountability For War Crimes

The UNA UK resolution calls on the Government to exercise universal jurisdiction for immediate arrest and surrender of individuals subject to ICC warrants. The ICC is

the primary international institution for investigating and prosecuting the most serious crimes of international concern, holding perpetrators to account and achieving justice for victims. The ICC is an impartial, professional and independent court. The UK Government respects its independence. There is a domestic legal process, which determines whether to endorse the warrant in accordance with the UK's ICC Act 2001. The UK will comply with its legal obligations.

The ICC is a Court of last resort, which is complementary to national legal systems. The ICC undertakes investigations/prosecutions only when national authorities are genuinely unable or unwilling to do so. It is for the Prosecutor to decide where to open investigations, to determine independently who should be prosecuted in accordance with his mandate under the Rome Statute. Where a state is not a State Party, the Court would not have jurisdiction to investigate crimes committed there in the absence of a referral from the UN Security Council. We cannot comment on hypotheticals including the UK's response when such a referral is considered by the Security Council.

Convention on the Rights of Older Persons

At a multilateral level, the UK engaged closely with the work of the UN's Open Ended Working Group on Ageing, supports UN resolutions on the human rights of older persons and is open in principle to the idea of a multilateral instrument dedicated to the human rights of older persons. We welcome the movement of UN discussions on a legally-binding treaty to Geneva and the adoption of the Human Rights Council resolution establishing an open-ended intergovernmental working group. We look forward to engaging in forthcoming discussions.

We will continue to include age as an important dimension across our work, engaging closely with UN bodies, and supporting UN resolutions on the human rights of older persons and widows, while encouraging our partners to do the same.

Greenland's independence

The UK's position on Greenland has been set out consistently. Greenland is a part of the Kingdom of Denmark, who are our close European partners and longstanding NATO allies.

Greenland belongs to its people. It is for Greenland and Denmark, and them only, to decide on matters concerning Greenland and Denmark.

The security of Greenland matters, and it will matter more as climate change reshapes the Arctic. As sea routes open and strategic competition intensifies, the High North will require greater attention, greater investment, and stronger collective defence. The UK is stepping up on Arctic security and with our NATO allies, we are working to strengthen Arctic defences.

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)

The UK is clear that any attempts by foreign Governments to coerce, intimidate or harm critics overseas are unacceptable. Regardless of nationality, freedom of speech and other fundamental rights of all people in the UK are protected under our domestic law.

The UK has called for the National Security Law to be repealed and for an end to the prosecution of all individuals charged under it. The Security Minister and the previous Minister for the Indo-Pacific have both raised their concerns regarding the arrest warrants and bounties directly with Chinese authorities, reaffirming that the safety and security of Hong Kongers in the UK is of the utmost importance to the Government.

The UK will continue to stand up for the rights of the people of Hong Kong, as we have demonstrated by introducing the bespoke immigration route for British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders and their eligible family members. This Government will continue to stand with the people of Hong Kong, strengthening the thick web of connections between our societies and remaining steadfast in commitment to the BN(O) visa route.

Human Rights

The UK fully supports the international human rights system, including the Human Rights Council, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Special Procedures and the human rights treaty body system. We are committed to promoting human rights globally, which includes encouraging implementation and ratification of UN human rights treaties - and, domestically, living up to our international obligations through domestic implementation. We will continue to support accountability for human rights abuses and violations, including as a Human Rights Council member.

Due to the challenging national security environment, the UK like many donors has offset current aid spend against increased defence spending. Despite this, the UK has maintained consistent year-on-year support to OHCHR (with an increased contribution in FY 2024/25) and remains one of its top donors. In addition, the UK continues to make mandatory and voluntary contributions to a range of institutions that promote human rights globally as well as providing funding and technical assistance directly to countries and regions via UK Embassies and Posts.

Information Services for Refugees and Migrants

The UK recognises that supporting refugees, displaced people and migrants is a shared international responsibility and the Government works closely with UNHCR, IOM and other international partners, host governments and local actors to support displaced people and migrants, including through programmes that promote and strengthen access to services.

Through partnering with IOM and ILO, Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) under the Better Regional Migration Management (BRMM) programme provide reliable information to migrants through a combination of in-person services, outreach, and digital tools, acting as trusted access points for guidance on safe migration, rights, and available services. They deliver structured orientation, counselling, and awareness-raising activities, supported by multilingual information materials and community campaigns that help counter misinformation and promote informed decision-making. This includes the use of digital platforms - such as call centres, chatbots, and recruitment transparency tools - which expand access to accurate, real-time information on migration processes and recruitment practices.

Together, these interventions ensure that potential and returning migrants, as well as their families, can access consistent, verified, and practical information, thus strengthening protection and enabling safer migration pathways. The programme also includes broad media coverage both on a local and regional level to increase public awareness on labour migration governance, fair recruitment, and migrant worker protections.

Israel/Palestine 100 years after the Balfour Declaration

The UK remains firmly committed to a two-state solution as the only viable path to a just and lasting peace for Israelis and Palestinians. We are clear that settlements are illegal under international law and must cease, and that any unilateral actions which undermine the viability of a future Palestinian state are unacceptable.

We continue to distinguish between Israel within its 1967 borders and settlements in Palestine and support international efforts to uphold international law and advance peace, including careful consideration of relevant International Court of Justice Advisory Opinions.

Israel/Palestine latest developments

The UK continues to support full implementation of the ceasefire, and the US led 20 Point Plan, including the unrestricted flow of humanitarian aid, noting that significant restrictions remain and risk undermining progress.

We remain engaged with international efforts to support post-conflict governance and security arrangements, including discussions linked to UNSCR 2803 and wider initiatives such as the Board of Peace (BoP). The UK is not a member of the Board of Peace. The UK attended the inaugural BoP meeting in February as an observer and continues to engage as a non-member. We will keep our position under review, while exploring how best to support delivery of 20 Point Plan alongside partners.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains dire, with 1.9 million Palestinians dependent on humanitarian assistance. Conditions will only worsen as families continue to live in overcrowded displacement sites without access to clean water, sanitation, hygiene and basic healthcare. We continue to call on the Government of Israel to immediately lift restrictions and allow food, medical supplies and fuel to reach those in desperate need, in line with international humanitarian law and as stipulated in the 20 Point Plan. We have been clear that the UN, including UNRWA, and international NGOs are integral to the response. Last financial year, we provided £81 million in humanitarian and early recovery funding. The scale of damage underlines the urgent need for coordinated international support to enable early recovery and reconstruction.

In the West Bank, we remain deeply concerned by settler violence and settlement expansion, including developments in sensitive areas such as E1. Settlements are illegal under international law and undermine prospects for a two-state solution.

We continue to engage actively in multilateral fora, including the UN Security Council, and note recent briefings which underline the scale of the challenge. Recent discussions have focused on the implementation of UNSCR 2803, including the sequencing of ceasefire measures, governance arrangements and longer-term

stabilisation, with a clear emphasis that future arrangements in Gaza should be Palestinian-led and support a strengthened and reformed Palestinian Authority.

The UK continues to carefully consider the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinions on Israel's occupation and humanitarian access as part of our wider approach. We remain firmly committed to upholding international law and support the independent role of the Court in upholding the rule of law.

Maximising the impact of the UN's work

The appointment of the Special Envoy for Future Generations is currently paused as a result of the United Nations' financial status and ongoing reforms, particularly within the framework of the UN80 initiative.

The UK does not currently engage with the UN Youth Delegate Programme which we withdrew from in 2016. Whilst we do not engage youth delegates to participate at the UN, the Government remains committed to providing opportunities for UK young people to engage in international fora through supporting programmes like the UK Young Ambassadors programme, the European Youth Forum, and the Commonwealth Youth Forum.

We actively consult with our UK Young Ambassadors on emerging policy areas, and they attend UN events on an ad-hoc basis. We recognise the need to consult UK youth organisations in international engagement

Nuclear Weapons

In an era of serious and unpredictable threats, our nuclear deterrent is the bedrock of our security and of our commitment to NATO. The fundamental purpose of our nuclear weapons is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. Regrettably, nuclear risks are rising. We are operating in a more uncertain, contested and deteriorating international security environment. Other states are increasing, modernising and diversifying their nuclear arsenals. Accordingly, the UK must continue to show it can and will defend both itself and our NATO Allies in all circumstances. Modernisation is therefore essential to ensure an independent, minimum, credible nuclear deterrent.

With the lapse of New START, we have entered a new era of arms control that reflects the realities of today's world. We fully support US efforts to intensify discussions among the P5 on strategic stability, including through the proposed multilateral strategic stability talks.

The UK remains fully committed to our obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons³.

We are proud to play our part in strengthening non-proliferation: supporting the NPT, the IAEA and the safeguards system; maintaining export controls; and championing the creation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) as practical contributions to

³ [This Treaty has been a truly vital pillar of international peace and security: UK statement at the NPT Review Conference - GOV.UK](#)

non-proliferation. We are clear that we do not want to see more states with sovereign nuclear weapons capabilities.

The UK does not have, and has no intention of introducing, a policy of no first use. No first use policies do not reduce strategic risks because they are not credible. It is implausible that a state in possession of nuclear weapons would not be willing to use them if their existence were at risk.

Regarding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), we have no intention of signing or ratifying the Treaty. The TPNW offers no solution to the challenges posed by a deteriorating security environment, nor does it offer solutions to the technical and political challenges related to disarmament. We remain focused on continued implementation of the NPT as the only credible vehicle for advancing nuclear disarmament.

Oceans

The Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement - also known informally as the High Seas Treaty - is an important step toward coordinated global action to tackle the climate and nature crisis. The Agreement demonstrates the ongoing role of multilateral institutions in facing global challenges and cements the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the cornerstone of ocean governance. It will also support the delivery of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, that includes the target to effectively conserve and manage at least 30% of the ocean by 2030.

The UK signed the BBNJ Agreement at the first opportunity on 20 September 2023. The UK Government introduced legislation on 10 September 2025 to enable the UK to implement its obligations under the BBNJ Agreement and move towards ratification. The Act received Royal Assent on 12 February 2026. Additional secondary legislation is required before the BBNJ Agreement can be ratified by the UK – and this process is currently underway.

The UK plays a leading role in many organisations and initiatives that have an important part to play in the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean. These include the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), International Seabed Authority (ISA) and Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). The UK chairs the Global Ocean Alliance, a coalition of likeminded countries pressing for greater ocean protection.

Removing UK citizenship

Deprivation decisions are made following careful consideration of advice from officials and lawyers and in accordance with international law, including the UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Each case is assessed individually.

Where a person is deprived on 'conducive to the public good' grounds, each decision is taken personally by the Home Secretary.

The conducive deprivation power can be applied only to those who are dual citizens, or where there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person can become a national of another country. The UK's Parliament chose to enact the power on that basis in order to avoid the prospect of leaving people stateless.

A person has a statutory right of appeal against the decision which they can choose to exercise.

The Government recognises that removing a person's citizenship is a weighty decision. Deprivation of citizenship on conducive grounds is reserved for those who pose a serious threat to the UK or its community or are involved in conduct such as terrorism, war crimes, serious organised crime or unacceptable behaviour such as the glorification of terrorism.

The Home Secretary has a number of tools available to mitigate against the threat posed to the UK by high harm people. She receives advice from her officials and from other Government departments as to the most appropriate and effective way to disrupt such people and best protect the UK, including from those who pose a threat to national security.

Resourcing the UN for current global challenges

No organisation in human history has done more to lift humans out of poverty, eliminate fatal disease, respond to natural disasters, prevent and stop conflict than the UN in its 80 years. As a committed multilateralist, the UK remains steadfastly behind the UN and the critical role it plays in preventing and ending conflicts, delivering lifesaving humanitarian assistance, protecting people from pandemics and disease, and supporting countries to build stronger economies and societies.

The UK is the fifth biggest contributor to the UN Regular and Peacekeeping budgets. For 2026, the UK's share of the UN Regular Budget is \$127.9 million which we paid in full and on time. For July 2025 to June 2026, the UK's share of the UN Peacekeeping Budget is \$260.2 million (4.73% of total). Our mandatory contributions have not been impacted by ODA reductions.

The UK provided an estimated £2.1bn in FY24/25 in humanitarian funding to the UN (which includes around £100.5m in un-earmarked funding to the UN humanitarian agencies and £52m to OCHA's Central Emergency Response Fund).

The UK is at the forefront of efforts to modernise the UN's Financial Regulations and Rules (FRRs) to put the organisation on a more sustainable financial footing. We strongly supported the December 2025 amendment ensuring credits are offset against arrears before assessments - and remain committed to working with all Member States to agree further reforms.

The UK stands ready to work with the Secretariat to find solutions to managing liquidity challenges, but needs to ensure that such measures also do not unfairly penalise those countries - like the UK - which pay subscriptions in full and on time.

Sudan

The conflict and humanitarian crisis in Sudan continue to be a top UK priority. We are using all diplomatic levers to push the warring parties to guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access, the safety of aid workers and civilians, and the end to the conflict, including as penholder on Sudan at UN Security Council and as leader of the core group at UN Human Rights Council. Following the Rapid Support Force's (RSF) deadly assault on El Fasher, the UK convened a Council session on 30

October 2025 to press for de-escalation and co-penned a Council press statement condemning the attack. During the UK's Council presidency, we put Sudan at the top of our agenda. On the 19 February 2026, the Foreign Secretary chaired a Council session and used her speech to bring the UN Fact-Finding Mission's findings on El Fasher directly to the chamber floor.

The UK maintains a longstanding arms embargo covering the whole of Sudan and has consistently pressed for the UN embargo on Darfur to be extended nationwide. So far, efforts to extend or expand the embargo have been unsuccessful because several Council members, including Russia, opposed widening the regime's scope and have signalled they would block or veto such proposals. The UK has been a strong supporter of the ICC and has provided technical assistance to facilitate its investigations. We will continue to press for an urgent humanitarian truce, the immediate protection of civilians, and the unimpeded delivery of aid in line with international humanitarian law.

Treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK

There are safe and legal routes for people to come to the UK should they wish to join family members here, work or study. Applicants would need to meet the requirements of the relevant Immigration Rule under which they were applying to qualify for a visa. Details about the criteria and how to apply are available at: <http://www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa>

In the Restoring Order and Control statement, we announced new safe and legal routes to offer sanctuary to those genuinely fleeing war and persecution. These will be based on a community sponsorship model, enabling local groups and charities to identify, welcome and support refugees, alongside dedicated routes for skilled workers and students. The routes will be sustainable, carefully managed and aligned with the UK's capacity to support refugees.

The Government will retain the ability to open emergency routes in response to global crises, as it did for Ukraine. Our intention is that individuals arriving through safe and legal routes will be on a ten-year path to settlement with scope to shorten this where individuals make a sustained contribution, in line with wider settlement reforms.

Asylum seekers are entitled to access and receive NHS primary and social care services from the point of their arrival in the UK. Entitlement is the same as for British citizens and other permanent residents in any nation of the UK.

Refugees, and those granted protection in the UK, have equitable access to the resources and support necessary to fully integrate into life here, achieve self-sufficiency, provide for themselves and their families, and contribute to the UK economy. Refugees have immediate access to the labour market and benefits, including employment support from Department for Work and Pensions work coaches. Unemployed refugees are eligible for full funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning.

In November last year, the Government published the Restoring Order and Control Statement setting out a significant new approach to refugee protection in the UK, which we call 'core protection'. This marks a significant change in direction - away from an assumption of offering permanent protection, and towards a more basic, and

temporary protection. A person granted Core Protection will need to apply to renew their status every 30 months. Where there has been a significant change in a country situation, or the relevant personal circumstances of the individual, a decision may be made to revoke their protection.

We want to encourage refugees to integrate more fully into the communities providing them sanctuary. To address this, we will encourage refugees to switch out of the Core Protection route wherever possible.

It has been a long-standing position that safe return reviews must be conducted when considering settlement protection applications. We understand how important the issue of settlement is to individuals, families and communities. That is precisely why the Government ran a public consultation to gather views on the proposals. The consultation, which ran for 12 weeks, opened on 20 November 2025 and closed on 12 February 2026. We are now reviewing and analysing all responses received.

This analysis will help inform the development of the final earned settlement model, including consideration of any potential exemptions or transitional measures for those already on a pathway to settlement. Once the final model has been decided, the Government will communicate the outcome publicly. As with all significant policy changes, the proposals will be subject to both economic impact assessments and equality impact assessments.

The suspension of the family reunion route is to enable the Government to undertake a full review of the current family rules to ensure we have a fair and properly balanced system.

The current situation is not sustainable. In 2024, there were 19,258 individuals who arrived under this route. That represented a 107% increase on grants in 2023 and a 368% increase from grants in 2022. In the year ending September 2025, 20,876 individuals were granted. This is the highest on record.

We consider the suspension of the refugee family reunion route to be proportionate and in accordance with the principles set out in section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 and our international obligations under the ECHR. Children will continue to be able to apply to join a parent or close relative on alternative family routes.

Asylum seekers are eligible to apply for permission to work in the UK if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of their own.

The Home Office keeps its policies under regular review. However, there are no current plans to change the permission to work policy for asylum seekers.

UN member states obligations

A UN Member State in arrears in the payment of its dues in an amount that equals or exceeds the contributions due for two preceding years can lose its vote in the General Assembly.

An exception is allowed if the Member State can show that conditions beyond its control contributed to this inability to pay. Other Member States submit partial payments to avoid reaching the ceiling at which they would lose their vote.

The UK continues to encourage all Members States to pay in full and on time.

Women Peace & Security (WPS)

The UK champions women's full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation in political and peace processes, and more broadly, in decision-making processes at local, regional, and national levels.

The UK plays an active role in supporting women's rights organisations (WROs) in advancing the WPS agenda, including through partnerships with international civil society and non-governmental organisations. In 2025, the 25th anniversary year of UNSCR 1325, we expanded our support for women peacebuilders and WROs by providing over £3.5 million from a centrally managed programme to support women in the most dangerous and fragile places.

This year, the UK is one of the largest donors to the UN's Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF). This includes funding to the WPHF's Women Human Rights Defender Window which provides rapid flexible funding and direct logistical support to WHRDs from or working in crisis and conflict affected areas to promote or protect human rights including women's rights in a peaceful manner at the local, national, regional and international level. This support can include the disbursement of grants to cover urgent costs such as short-term livelihood and protection expenses.

The Murad Code was launched jointly by the UK and Nobel Laureate Nadia Murad in 2022. The Murad Code is a tool to ensure that work with survivors to investigate, document and record their experiences is safe, ethical and effective in upholding their human rights. We continue to work with partners around the world to promote the Murad Code and ensure its implementation, and we have commissioned an external review of how the Murad Code could be used to strengthen HMG's own practice.

A WPS approach to foreign, development, defence and security is not just the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do. There cannot be peace, security or prosperity without women playing their part, free from violence and free from fear.

By 2030, at least 90% of FCDO bilateral ODA programmes will contribute to gender equality, either as a principal or significant objective (measured using the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker criteria). This approach allows us to sustain ambition and impact for women and girls even as overall aid budgets reduce, by integrating gender equality into all our work.

As set out in the UK's new International Strategic Framework on Women and Girls 2026, the UK's approach to promoting gender equality is rooted in an understanding that advancing the rights of women and girls both transforms individual lives and drives progress on security at a national and international scale.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) plays a central role in the implementation and oversight of the UK Women, Peace and Security agenda, sharing responsibility for governance as well as monitoring and evaluation with the FCDO.

The current UK WPS National Action Plan (NAP) highlights the importance of arms control to prevent irresponsible and illicit use of weapons, in order to reduce harm to women and girls.

The WPS NAP is co-owned by the FCDO and the MOD and includes seven government departments with commitments to the WPS agenda, including Northern Ireland Office and Northern Ireland Executive. This is in recognition of the significant WPS lessons from Northern Ireland and the ongoing importance of promoting the crucial work of Northern Ireland's women in peacebuilding and the enduring requirement for women's engagement in focussing on implementing the Belfast Good Friday Agreement.

Yours sincerely,

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office