

Readout of PM's call with PM Jacinda Ardern of New Zealand: 10 December 2020

Press release

Readout of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's call with the Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern.



This evening the Prime Minister spoke to the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, following her recent electoral victory.

The Prime Minister began by commending New Zealand's success in tackling coronavirus. Prime Minister Ardern congratulated the UK on becoming the first country in the world to start using the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. Both leaders agreed on the importance of the international community coming together in the months ahead to share information, expertise and resources when it comes to coronavirus vaccines and the wider recovery.

The Prime Ministers discussed the fight against climate change. The Prime Minister emphasised his desire to work with Prime Minister Ardern ahead of the UK's COP26 summit in Glasgow next year. The leaders also agreed on the need to address climate change and biodiversity as two sides of the same coin, and the Prime Minister welcomed Prime Minister Ardern's endorsement of the UN's Leaders' Pledge for Nature.

Both leaders looked forward to enhancing the UK-New Zealand relationship in the coming year in areas including trade and tackling shared threats, and looked forward to meeting in person at the earliest opportunity.

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Daesh Accountability should be a truly international effort

Excellencies,

I welcome Special Advisor Karim Khan's report on the continued progress made by The UN Investigative Team for the Accountability of Daesh in recent months, and the first report since the Team's mandate was extended for a year in September 2020. To underline that this is extremely important work and we continue to support efforts to ensure accountability for Daesh victims.

The United Kingdom notes UNITAD's flexibility in implementing their mandate while responding to challenges posed by COVID-19, and particularly to limitations on field-based investigative activities. The fact that six dedicated investigation units are now in place is to be commended. And we welcome the addition of thematic units; particularly in the area of gender-based crimes.

The United Kingdom will continue to support the Investigative Team to ensure that the team is able to fulfil its mandate. This is why the UK has provided assistance to minority-focused investigations, as well as supporting the development of Shuhud, a digital platform allowing witnesses and survivors to submit information remotely, securely, and confidentially in relation to Daesh crimes.

We welcome contributions from other countries; Daesh Accountability should be a truly international effort, just as the Global Coalition to defeat Daesh was.

The United Kingdom is seized of the enormity of the task ahead to find a solution that enables UNITAD's evidence to be used effectively to bring those responsible to account in Iraq. We welcome progress on draft legislation to provide the domestic legal basis for the prosecution of Daesh members for international crimes in Iraq. But we urge close collaboration between the Team, the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to agree a way forward and secure an evidence sharing mechanism that provides assurances on use of the death penalty. And we welcome continued collaboration with the Iraqi judicial authorities.

Justice also means assisting the victims of Daesh to rebuild their lives. We welcome the Team's expanded capacities for assisting with witness protection and support, including psycho-social care and gender-attuned services for survivors and family members.

Regular updates to the UN Security Council, Mr President, are key in allowing us to see the progress the Team is making. The Team must seek to engage both with us at the United Nations and with individual member states who are providing staffing, funding and support.

The United Kingdom continues to support the work of the UN Investigative Team; this is why we have contributed £2 million and continue to engage in New York, London, Baghdad and Erbil. The work undertaken by the Team is unique; we must ensure it continues to provide a sustainable and internationally supported mechanism in the future. The United Kingdom welcomes continued support for the Team from UNSC members through funding, staffing and engagement to demonstrate UNSC commitment and ensure evidence is gathered to hold Daesh to account.

Ensuring justice and accountability are delivered across Sudan

Thank you, Mr President.

I would like to start by thanking the Prosecutor for her 32nd report on the situation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 1593 (2005). The continued work of the Prosecutor and her team is an important part of the efforts towards ensuring accountability for the most serious of crimes committed in Darfur. The International Criminal Court also has an important role to play in global efforts to end impunity for these crimes of international concern, and the United Kingdom fully supports its efforts to hold perpetrators to account and achieve justice for victims in Darfur.

Mr President, since this Council was last briefed on the situation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 1593 we have continued to see the Government of Sudan make welcome progress in implementing key reforms to ensure justice and accountability is delivered across Sudan. These include the repeal of criminal law provisions that prevented cooperation with the ICC as well as legal reforms on women's and children's rights.

Here, I would like to draw particular attention to the first visit of the ICC Chief Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, to Khartoum, a historic moment for the new Sudan. The cooperation between the Court and the Sudanese authorities is a clear demonstration of the importance that the transitional government has placed on the pursuit of justice for victims of atrocity crimes in Darfur. As is the recent Juba Peace Agreement, which pledges the signatories' preparedness for full and unlimited cooperation with the ICC concerning persons for whom arrest warrants have been issued.

Mr President, whilst it is right that we recognise and applaud the progress that has been made, the UK acknowledges that this is one of many steps in the process of ensuring justice and accountability are served – and that issues of concern remain. As the Prosecutor details in her report the security situation in Darfur has deteriorated during this period, with spikes in violence resulting in the deaths, injury and further displacements of civilians. The continued persistence of human rights violations and incidence

of sexual violence, particularly against children, is concerning and unacceptable.

Here, I echo the statement to the Council of my country's Permanent Representative on Tuesday and call on the Government of Sudan to build on the progress already made and intensify their efforts to improve judicial systems and rule of law institutions as part of the implementation of their National Plan for Civilian Protection (S/2020/429).

Finally, I would like to thank the Prosecutor and her team for their continued dedication and work on this situation during this reporting period. The United Kingdom welcomes the work of the Office of the Prosecutor since the surrender of Ali Kushayb to continue their investigative activities to strengthen and reinforce this case. We urge the Government of Sudan to continue their work with the ICC and facilitate, swiftly, the Office's request for support on these efforts including access to Darfur.

In closing, Mr President, let me reiterate the United Kingdom's support for the welcome commitments that the Government of Sudan has made on ensuring justice and accountability not only for historic crimes committed in Darfur, but across Sudan. We urge Sudan to build upon this progress as they continue to implement the goals of the transition. We stand ready to assist as part of our wider commitment to support the people of Sudan.

Guidance: Avian Influenza (bird flu) vaccination

Vaccination policy, guidance and authorisation requests for avian influenza vaccination in zoo birds.

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