

UN Human Rights Council 42: Annual Discussion on the integration of a Gender perspective

The United Kingdom welcomes today's discussion.

The UK Government is committed to gender equality, including SDG 5, reflected in our appointment of a Special Envoy for Gender Equality and our commitment to the Women Peace and Security agenda, the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative, as well as our work to champion 12 years of quality education for all girls, and to promote and protect women's rights.

We believe that all people should be able to live with dignity, free from violence or discrimination, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gender equality is much broader than gender parity and equal representation, although these are good first steps. It is about equal rights, opportunities, and responsibilities. If we are calling for gender equality internationally we all must demonstrate our determination to do this here in the UN. It is crucial to integrate a gender perspective into all aspects on the UN's work, from panels to peacekeeping and from resolutions to recommendations.

As we look ahead to the 20th anniversary of the UN Security Resolution 1325 in October 2020, the UK is prioritising women's meaningful participation in peace processes; when women do meaningfully participate in a peace process the impact is profound, with the resulting agreement 64% less likely to fail and 35% more like to last at least fifteen years.

Mr Vice President,

Specifically, I would welcome the panellists' views on what more we can do collectively to end sexual harassment across all international meetings, including this Council?

Thank you.

Flood sirens and emergency plans put to the test in Calderdale

A live training exercise to help prepare people for flood incidents and other emergencies is being held in the Calder Valley

Prime Minister announces ambitious package of support to protect and restore the world's forests

An area of forest the size of the UK is lost every year around the world as a result of deforestation and unsuitable farming methods. The UK is committed to the change needed to reverse the damage already caused by the illegal logging trade, to protect and restore the world's mangroves and develop programmes to bring species back from the brink of extinction.

Speaking at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York Prime Minister Boris Johnson is announcing a bold package of support to help developing countries to stop the destruction of their forests and end the extinction of rare species.

- The new package will:
 - protect forests and mangroves, which act as vital carbon sinks;
 - create new protected areas and restore degraded ecosystems, like abandoned land, which was once home to forests, mangroves and other precious habitats;
 - connect protected areas through 'green corridors' which allow threatened species populations to mix. These are a proven way of helping to bring species back from the brink of extinction; and
 - provide poor communities with sustainable alternatives to logging, mining or unsustainable agriculture like palm oil production. This will give them an economic incentive to protect habitats and species.

International Development and Environment Minister Zac Goldsmith said:

Our planet's rich biodiversity is under threat. As we destroy the world's forests, we drive ever more species to extinction, we erode nature's ability to cope with climate change and we undermine the livelihoods of millions of people. The UK recognises that we are at a tipping point and that action now is both urgent and essential.

Our contribution through UK aid reflects that and will help turn the tide on the environmental crisis we face.

This package of investment includes a £100 million investment in the new Biodiverse Landscapes Fund to slow, stop and reverse biodiversity loss in some of the world's most valuable habitats such as forests and mangroves, which provide a vital defence against flooding and habitats species on the verge of extinction.

A £30 million pledge to the Forest Governance Markets and Climate programme will support the UK's continued work with countries including Indonesia, Ghana and Liberia, to help stop deforestation by tackling illegal logging and helping to promote the legal timber trade. This partnership will also work to stop wildlife trafficking between China, and countries in the Mekong and Congo Basin, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Republic of Congo through supporting government reform. It will also support greater action by the private sector to use timber only from legal, certified sources.

A further £9.6 million will fund the Just Rural Transition initiative to help poor farmers in developing countries make their agricultural practices more eco-friendly, while protecting the land that they are farming. This programme will also protect natural water sources and forests in developing countries, which support the growing of rice, a staple in the daily diet of 3.5 billion people around the world.

By 2030 the destruction of the world's important habitat and the threat of climate change could force more than 100 million people into poverty. The UK government's package of investment will bring together governments, scientists, companies and producers from around the world to change and improve the global approach in the run up to COP26.

Notes to editors:

- The funding package includes:
 - £100 million – UK aid from both DFID and DEFRA – to a new Biodiverse Landscapes Fund that will help to slow, stop and reverse biodiversity loss in some of the world's most valuable habitats.
 - £30 million extension from DFID to the Forest Governance Markets and Climate Programme to help tackle illegal logging and promote the legal timber trade.
 - £9.6 million towards DFID's Just Rural Transition initiative, which is addressing the challenge of feeding nine billion people by 2030 while avoiding the destruction of the natural systems which support agriculture. UK aid will help developing countries make their agricultural practices more productive and eco-friendly.

Press release: Prime Minister announces ambitious package of support to protect and restore the world's forests

New funding to halt loss of and reverse the damage already done to the

world's mangroves and forests which are vital to protecting many species already so close to extinction.

Celebrating National Inclusion Week

Today I've headed down to London, to the House of Lords in fact, to join other leaders from inclusive employers to help kick-start National Inclusion Week.

National Inclusion Week is an annual week of workplace activities and events that highlight the importance of inclusion across the UK. Here at BPDTS we've video chats, quizzes, blogs and much more planned – and will be focussing on topics such as data inclusivity, inclusivity in meetings and unconscious bias. We're also looking forward to joining other inclusive employers on webinars during the week

The theme for National Inclusion Week this year is #everydayinclusion – which chimes with me both personally and professionally.

Being respected and valued for who we are

I'm sure I can't be alone in admitting there are times during my life where I feel others haven't been overly welcoming or inclusive towards me. I don't mind sharing that on some of these occasions this has really upset me, made me feel angry, knocked my self-esteem and in my mind prevented me from doing as well as I could.

Equally there are other instances where someone going out of their way to support and include me in what's going on has made a huge positive difference to my life.

If you know me well, you'll also know that music is one of my passions. But until recent years I've never been able to read music or play an instrument. When I moved house seven years ago I decided that was going to change.

I tried out at the local male voice choir but wasn't made at all welcome – no one bothered to talk with me and I got the sense people were making fun of me. I kept at it for around 2 months, but things weren't getting any better so I spoke with the Musical Conductor. He believed it was because of two things; being a lot younger than the others and being what they call in this part of Yorkshire, a 'comerinerer'. Needless to say I was upset and angry and eventually stopped going.

I then joined the local brass band, and what a completely different story. Everyone went out of their way to welcome me, to help me to learn how to play and supported me 100%. I felt fabulous and it encouraged me to put extra

effort into practice each week to get better.

This probably explains why, 5 years later, I now play in the senior band and still put extra practice in whenever I can. And all because I was made to feel valued.

Becoming naturally inclusive at BPDTS

With 'Inclusivity' being one of our company's values we're doing all we can to create a happy, safe and healthy work environment for all of our people – where we trust, value and respect each other and celebrate our diversity.

We want to support our people to feel they can be authentic and true to themselves – because we believe it will help them to unlock their full potential and be the best they can be in everything they do.

Listening to and valuing the perspectives of people from different backgrounds is helping us create a rich tapestry of creativity where new innovative ideas and challenging the status quo constructively is becoming the new norm.

We're clear where we want to get to. Our ultimate goal is to become naturally inclusive, where respecting and celebrating one another's diversity simply runs deep through the veins of everything we do without thinking about it.

Take part in National Inclusion Week

National Inclusion Week provides us all with a great opportunity to think about, learn and identify what we can do to be better human beings to one another.

Think about a moment when you suddenly felt included in something: when was this, what was it you felt included in, who made you feel included, what was it that made you feel included, and how did it feel when you were? Now go make that difference to someone.

And what then for the rest of the year? I'm reminded of a saying that goes along the lines of 'what we focus on will prosper, and what we don't will wither away'.

The call to action for leaders attending the launch event today was to reach out to others to help them understand the opportunity which inclusion brings. I hope I've gone some way towards doing this. If not, watch out for more blogs during the week on the things we've already or plan to do to be naturally inclusive here at BPDTS – #LifeatBPDTS.

Find out more about [National Inclusion Week](#) and join in activities happening where you work.