

# UK deploys a team of three humanitarian experts to Bahamas following devastating Hurricane Dorian

The UK has deployed a three-strong team of humanitarian experts to the Bahamas to begin immediate work on assessing the damage and support needed following Hurricane Dorian.

Hurricane Dorian is a category five hurricane, with wind speeds reaching up to 185 mph as it passed over the Bahamas.

The team of DFID experts, who departed from London this morning, are expected to arrive in the region later today and will work closely alongside the Bahamas Government and the Caribbean's regional disaster management agency (CDEMA) to assess the scale of the damage and help coordinate the relief effort.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

My thoughts are with everyone affected by this devastating hurricane which is causing widespread disruption.

I have sent an initial team of experts to the Bahamas to help assess the damage and coordinate the UK's response, including any potential use of military assets if required.

The UK is a world leader in providing disaster relief, and it's right that we support the people of the Bahamas in their time of need.

The British Royal Navy auxiliary ship Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Mounts Bay has been pre-positioned to the region to offer her support if required. The ship is capable of carrying specialist water rescue vehicles and includes a helicopter that can be used to deliver humanitarian aid. RFA Mounts Bay has relief supplies on-board including water carriers, hygiene kits and shelter kits.

This is in addition to UK support provided for the deployment of specialist teams in the region from CDEMA – including engineers, health professionals and logistics experts – who will support the local authorities' response and assess whether further international assistance is required.

## **Notes to editors**

1. The Bahamas is not eligible for Official Development Assistance under internationally agreed rules because of its Gross National Income per capita. International aid rules do not prevent the UK from responding to

humanitarian crises like this. For this particular crisis, we are drawing non-ODA funding from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF).

2. Final costs will depend on the path and intensity of the storm, how many teams are needed to deploy and for how long.

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## **Government kickstarts Office for Veterans' Affairs with £5m funding**

Ministers have wasted no time in backing up their promise to tackle the challenges faced by our nation's proud veterans – securing a £5 million funding boost in this week's spending round, to be announced by Chancellor Sajid Javid on Wednesday.

The cash, won by the Cabinet Office, will fund additional staff and resources, so that the newly-established Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) can drive cross-Whitehall action to support veterans' welfare.

The OVA will join up support and coordinate existing funding – holding other parts of government to account for delivering the Armed Forces Covenant and action on mental and physical health, education, employment and veteran homelessness.

Charities, MPs and the Sun newspaper made their concerns about the need for a coordinated approach to the post-service needs of Armed Forces personnel clear with their calls for top politicians to sign a Veterans' Pledge.

Since becoming Prime Minister, Boris Johnson has acted quickly to establish the OVA – and send a clear message that it will have real clout across Whitehall and beyond.

Minister for the Cabinet Office, Oliver Dowden, will represent veterans issues at Cabinet, and lead the OVA alongside Veterans Minister and former soldier, Johnny Mercer. They will drive policy from the heart of government and coordinate Whitehall machinery to make sure ex-service personnel get life-long support.

Chancellor Sajid Javid said:

This Spending Round is focused on public services. And no-one has given more than the service men and women who lay their lives on the line for all of us. Supporting them when they leave service is not just our responsibility but also our duty, which is why we've made funding the launch of the Office of Veterans Affairs a top priority.

Minister for the Cabinet Office, Oliver Dowden, said:

Now that we've secured this additional funding, we can use it to fight for them from the heart of government, and make sure this country never lets down those heroes who risked their lives to keep us all safe.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans, Johnny Mercer said:

The Prime Minister has given us a great responsibility to make sure our veterans are supported in every aspect of their lives, including their healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities. We're already hard at work bringing together the right people across government, and this new funding will be instrumental in making this vision a reality.

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## **Chevening OCIS/ Abdullah Gül Fellowship applications are now open**

Hosted by the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

The Chevening Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) Fellowships are aimed at mid-career academics or professionals who are dedicated to the promotion of academic activities which encourage a more informed understanding of the culture and civilisation of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies.

The following fellowships are a collaboration between the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office and OCIS:

- Chevening OCIS Fellowship
- Chevening OCIS Abdullah Gül Fellowship

### **Course/programme structure**

Fellows will undertake a 6-month period of self-directed research focusing on their own project on the culture and civilisation of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies in a global context.

Fellows will benefit from meeting a multi-disciplinary group of scholars focusing on the Islamic world and have the opportunity to develop contacts with relevant individuals, discuss issues relating to the Islamic world, including Islamic history, classical Islamic sciences, economics and Islamic

finance, and the study of Muslims in the West. Fellows will contribute to the Centre's objective to encourage and promote sustained dialogue and collaboration within the global academic community of the culture and civilisation of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies. OCIS is a Recognized Independent Centre for the University of Oxford and provides a meeting point for the Western and Islamic worlds of learning.

This fellowship programme will commence in October 2020. Fellows will need to develop their own research project to focus on during their fellowship prior to arriving in the UK.

## Benefits

- six-month period of research at OCIS
- living expenses for the duration of the fellowship
- return economy airfare from home country to the UK
- allowance package for research-related activities
- access to a programme of cultural events and activities organised by the FCO and the Chevening Secretariat

## Eligibility

The Chevening OCIS Abdullah Gül Fellowship is available to applicants from Turkey.

To be eligible for a Chevening OCIS Fellowship, you must:

- demonstrate the potential to rise to a position of leadership and influence
- demonstrate the personal, intellectual and interpersonal attributes reflecting this potential
- return to country of your citizenship at the end of the period of the fellowship
- hold a postgraduate level qualification (or equivalent professional training or experience in a relevant area) at the time of application
- have significant professional and/or academic research experience (at least five years)
- provide evidence of meeting at least the minimum English language abilities for Chevening Awards
- not hold British or dual-British citizenship \*not be an employee, a former employee, or relative of an employee (since July 2016) of Her Majesty's Government (including British embassies/high commissions, the Department for International Development, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Department for International Trade, the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office), the British Council, or a staff member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities

Note: Immediate relatives are defined as parents or step-parents, siblings or step-siblings, children or step-children, spouse, civil partner or unmarried (where the couple have been in a relationship akin to marriage or civil partnership for at least two years)

Please note that applicants who have previously received financial benefit from a HMG-funded scholarship or fellowship are eligible to apply after a period of five years following the completion of their first HMG funded award. In these cases, applicants will be required to demonstrate their career progression from that point.

## Application requirement

Applicants should be prepared to outline a short proposal on the area of academic research they would like to conduct at the time of application submission. The proposal should include a main research question and how the applicant intends to conduct this research while in residence at the Centre.

All applications for a Chevening Award must be made through the Chevening designated online application system (OAS), which can be accessed through [www.chevening.org](http://www.chevening.org).

If you have a question related to Chevening Scholarships and Fellowships applications please visit the [frequently asked questions](#) page.

Chevening Scholarship applications will close on 5 November 2019 at 12:00 UK time.

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## Portable protection barriers for Troops

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is launching Phase 2 of 'Take Cover!' This competition is seeking lightweight, portable, rapidly deployable troop and equipment protection on the front-line.

Phase 2 is looking for novel physical systems and technologies that can form a suite of protection measures for personnel and equipment, above or below ground. We want to find and fund ideas and innovations for structures that can be easily stored, transported and crucially, rapidly constructed by troops in operational areas. Particularly, we want to hear from innovators working on protective structures that could potentially be self-erecting, inflatable, unfurling or folding for example.

The physical barrier will need to be capable of protecting a small group of up to 10 soldiers and their equipment and any solution should be simple to construct, not requiring any specialist training or specific or heavy tools.

This competition focuses on protection from ballistic threats and fragmentation for soldiers on the front line, but the protection against blast and directed energy threats would also be of interest.

Total funding of up to £550k is available for this phase to fund multiple projects. Full details are available in the [competition document](#).

The competition closes on Tuesday 29 October 2019 at midday (GMT).

Queries should be sent to [accelerator@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:accelerator@dstl.gov.uk).

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## **Court winds-up companies involved in fraudulent investment scheme**

North London-based Carlton Church Ltd, Standard Fidelity Ltd, Cathay Dupont Ltd, and International Finance & Consulting Ltd were all wound up on 13 August 2019 by Judge Briggs in the High Court of Justice, following an investigation by the Insolvency Service. The Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator.

At the hearing to consider the petition to wind up the companies, the court heard that the four companies claimed to trade as IT consultants, software developers, promoters of humanitarian projects in Asia and providers of business outsourcing services in order to secure funds from overseas investors.

Following confidential investigations by the Insolvency Service, however, the Court upheld there was no evidence that the companies had been engaged in any form of legitimate business activity.

Investigators established that the four companies, including similar named companies registered abroad, fraudulently sold shares in pharmaceutical companies to the overseas investors.

All together the four companies secured \$572,739 (USD) from 8 investors based in Russia, Australia, Dubai, Oman and South Africa and the proceeds raised through the fraudulent shares were laundered through an organised crime ring in the Philippines.

Enquires established that shares purchased never materialised and when investors sought to take back their investments, further funds were demanded before any payment would be made. However, despite investors paying over additional money, they did not receive any of their investments back.

Further evidence uncovered that all four companies demonstrated a lack of transparency, they were specifically incorporated to operate a fraudulent investment scheme and all four operated with a lack of commercial probity having failed to file accounts or provide accounting records to investigators.

The court also heard that there was evidence that all four companies were closely connected. They all shared a common director, David Martyn, as well as a company secretary, Geoffrey Dixon.

And while Barry Rosen was listed as the actual owner of the companies, investigators determined that he was a patsy for another person – David Gilinsky.

Investigators were also able to demonstrate to the court that Barry Rosen's conduct was questionable as he had been arrested by the Philippines National Police in August 2018 in relation to alleged instances of transnational online fraud and wider investigations into organised crime syndicates operating in Manila.

The crime syndicates carried out boiler room frauds, which use high pressure sales techniques and cold calling people in order to solicit them to invest in questionable share schemes, and specifically targeted expatriates by misrepresenting themselves as stock brokers.

The court was informed at the hearing of the petition that investigations into the four companies have been conducted in various locations and jurisdictions. Warnings had been issued by the Financial Conduct Authority, Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Japanese Financial Services Authority, New Zealand Markets Authority and Luxemburg's Commission de Surveillance de Secteur Financier.

David Hill, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Throughout our investigations it was plain to see that the companies lacked any sort of transparency and when we tried to engage with the directors there was a total failure to co-operate.

Our evidence shows that the four companies were part of a wider scheme to target genuine investors and we are pleased with the court's decision to shut down these companies, seriously curtailing their opportunities to harm anyone else.

All enquiries concerning the affairs of the companies should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 4 Abbey Orchard Street, London, SW1P 2HT. Telephone: 0207 637 1110, Email: [piu.or@insolvency.gov.uk](mailto:piu.or@insolvency.gov.uk).

The four companies include:

- Carlton Church Ltd (10122061) incorporated on 13 April 2016
- Cathay Dupont Ltd (10534974) was incorporated on 21 December 2016
- International Finance & Consulting Ltd (09423564) was incorporated on 5 February 2015
- Standard Fidelity Ltd (10280561) was incorporated on 15 July 2016.

All those companies shared a common registered office, at 196 High Road, London, N22 8HH.

The petitions to wind up the companies were presented in the High Court of Justice on 11 July 2019, under the provisions of section 124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 following confidential enquiries by Company Investigations under section 447 of the Companies Act 1985, as amended.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). [Further information about live company investigations is available here.](#)

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is available here.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: