

Consultation outcome: Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers (bottles and cans)

We are seeking views on proposals to introduce a deposit return scheme for drinks containers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Joint UK-Canada Statement on the Global Conference for Media Freedom

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Ambassadors, Colleagues

I make this statement on behalf of Canada and the United Kingdom. Earlier this year, my Canadian colleague briefed the Permanent Council on the UK and Canada's plans for the Global Conference on Media Freedom. I would like to share some highlights from the conference, which took place in London on 10-11 July 2019, and look ahead to the future.

Over 100 countries were represented at the conference, with 60 ministers and 1,500 delegates from all regions. Over the two days, there were 25 different panel discussions on a variety of issues around media freedom. In their keynote speeches the UK Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, the Canadian Foreign Minister and former journalist, Chrystia Freeland, and Special Envoy on Media Freedom, Amal Clooney, set out the challenge to participants to champion media freedom. The conference also heard directly from journalists who face harassment, threats and legal pressure at home.

I am delighted that the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir, and a team from his office joined us in London. Mr Désir took part in the launch of the Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression, with his counterparts from the UN, Organisation of American States, African Union and civil society. He also participated in a plenary discussion with the Foreign Ministers of Germany, Malta and Uzbekistan, and RFOM colleagues joined sessions on the Western Balkans. We are also pleased that the documentary, A Dark Place, on safety of female journalists online received its first London screening at the Conference.

We announced several initiatives at the conference:

- A Global Pledge for signature by Governments to commit to forming a new coalition to protect media freedom and – through a contact group of MFAs

and diplomatic missions – to lobby on cases of attacks on journalists.

- Development of a UK National Committee and National Action Plan on the Safety of Journalists
- An international task force, involving multilateral organisations and civil society, which will provide support to countries drawing up National Action Plans.
- A new Global Media Defence Fund, to be administered by UNESCO to support journalists to access legal advice and training on safety and investigative journalism.

The conference hosted a first meeting of the independent High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom, convened by Special Envoy Amal Clooney, and to be chaired by former UK Supreme Court President Lord Neuberger

Media freedom is essential for economic prosperity, social development and resilient democracies, for maintaining a free and open society and accountable systems of government and for safeguarding human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We are grateful to the many OSCE states that participated and made the conference such a success. The conference was just the start, not the culmination, of our joint campaign. We will continue to encourage states to support the media freedom coalition and pledge, and to contribute to the Global Media Defence Fund.

Thank you.

Hajj pilgrims urged to be aware of MERS-CoV advice

The risk of infection to UK residents travelling to the Middle East remains very low and PHE, NaTHNaC and the World Health Organization do not currently advise any travel restrictions to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) in relation to MERS-CoV.

We urge pilgrims returning from Hajj and Umrah to look out for these symptoms:

- fever
- coughing

- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

If individuals experience these symptoms within 14 days of leaving the Middle East, they should call their GP immediately or NHS 111 and mention their travel history.

However, Saudi Arabia has reported over 150 cases across the country since January 2019, occurring mainly among KSA residents. There is growing evidence that camels can be a source of infection. MERS-CoV can also spread person-to-person if there is close contact. It is important to practise good personal, hand and respiratory hygiene including covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, using tissue or the upper sleeve, and washing your hands with soap and water regularly.

Dr Gavin Dabrera, lead for MERS-CoV at PHE said:

We strongly advise travellers to avoid contact with camels and consumption of camel products in the Middle East and to practise good hand hygiene.

Pilgrims returning from Hajj and Umrah with symptoms including fever and cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days of leaving the Middle East, should call their GP immediately or NHS 111 and mention their travel history.

Dr Dipti Patel, director of NaTHNaC, said:

Our [information sheet for pilgrims](#) includes information on health regulations, vaccine requirements and recommendations, and other general health advice for those planning to travel for Hajj and Umrah. Pilgrims are strongly advised to follow our specific guidance about staying safe and healthy when travelling.

1. The annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), known as the Hajj, is due to take place between 19 to 24 August this year, with many pilgrims travelling from the UK
2. Umrah is a shorter, non-compulsory pilgrimage for Muslims that can be performed at any time. Hajj is the annual pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca) in the KSA.
3. There have been 5 cases of MERS CoV in the UK since 2012.
4. General travel health advice for travellers going to Saudi Arabia is available from NaTHNaC's website [TravelHealthPro](#).
5. The requirements and recommendations for the 2019 Hajj season are now available on the [KSA Ministry of Health website](#). We advise you to keep abreast of updates.
6. Health advice posters can be found here:

New Chair of Financial Reporting Council announced

Following an open competition, Simon Dingemans has been appointed as the new Chair of the Financial Reporting Council, and will lead its transition to [Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority \(ARGA\)](#)

Mr Dingemans will join at a crucial time for the audit regulator. ARGA, the new enhanced regulator, will build on the UK's status as a great place to do business and will play an important role in strengthening public trust in businesses and the regulations that govern them.

Mr Dingemans said:

I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to lead this important process to reform the FRC and establish the ARGA as a very different regulator for the future, one that will bring more challenge, transparency and forward thinking.

I also intend the ARGA to be at the forefront of driving the reforms we need to rebuild confidence in the audit market and the reporting and governance standards that underpin trust in UK businesses.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

I would like to congratulate Simon on his appointment. He brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the role in taking forward the transition to the new enhanced regulator, ARGA.

A strong and competitive audit market is crucial to UK business, and our package of reforms will ensure the UK continues to offer the highest standards.

Mr Dingemans was until recently the Chief Financial Officer and a member of the main board of GlaxoSmithKline plc. He stepped down in May 2019 after over 8 years with the company. During his time with GSK, he provided operational and financial leadership through a period of significant business transformation including extensive restructuring and the strategic re-shaping of the group and its 3 global businesses: Pharmaceuticals, Vaccines and Consumer Healthcare, which together employ nearly 100,000 people.

Mr Dingemans joined GSK in 2011 from Goldman Sachs International where he was a Managing Director and Partner.

He has been a Trustee of the Donmar Theatre since 2018 and also served as Chairman of the 100 Group of Finance Directors between 2014 and 2016. He has a Masters Degree in Geography from Oxford.

The application process involved a pre-appointment hearing with the Commons Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee which took place on 17 July. The Committee reported back to Greg Clark, the Business Secretary on Mr Dingemans' suitability for the post and endorsed the appointment.

Queen appoints Lord-Lieutenant for Perth and Kinross: 23 July 2019

Queen appoints Mr Gordon Kenneth Stephen Leckie as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Perth and Kinross.