

Notice: Squibb Group Limited: application made to impound water

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
 - which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
 - when you need to comment by
-

Notice: Bossington Estates Management Ltd: application made to impound water

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Press release: Minister for Europe delivers key speech at Ukraine conference

Two months on from the London Ukraine Reform Conference, Sir Alan Duncan will travel to Ukraine where he will meet representatives of the Ukrainian government, including the Vice Prime Minister for European Integration Ivanna Klympush-Tsyntsadze. He will also hear about the deteriorating human rights situation in Crimea, illegally annexed by Russia, when he meets with Crimean human rights defenders.

Sir Alan will deliver a keynote speech at the Yalta European Strategy (YES) Forum, an annual conference focusing on Ukraine's European future. He will reaffirm that the UK government will continue to support the Ukrainian people and government in their efforts to implement an ambitious programme of political and economic reform.

Ahead of his visit, Sir Alan said:

I am delighted to make my first trip to Ukraine and I'm looking forward to following up on the priority reform areas discussed at the London Ukraine Reform Conference. It's clear that Ukraine's security and success matters to the UK, Europe and beyond. I urge the Ukrainian government to push forward their ambitious reform programme, particularly on anti-corruption, pensions, healthcare and the judiciary.

My message to the Ukrainian people and government is that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with you in upholding Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. As the UK leaves the EU, our political and practical support will not diminish. We remain committed to Ukraine over the long term, and fully support Ukraine's path towards greater integration with Europe.

I will also meet Crimean human rights defenders to discuss the deteriorating human rights situation in Crimea. The UK does not, and will not, recognise the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia. Crimea is Ukraine.

Speech: International Day of Democracy

15th September marks the United Nations International Day of Democracy. I wanted to take this opportunity to restate the UK's strong support for democracy and human rights at a time when civil society is under increased threat in many parts of the world. If democracy is to flourish in Britain, Rwanda and the world, we need to discover a mutual trust—a trust of citizens in their politicians and, perhaps most difficult of all, a trust of politicians in their citizens. Democracy, like any important moral consideration, is not a state but an activity, a way of behaving. It is an active, living contract between the politician and the citizen. If the International Day of Democracy is about anything, it is about citizens.

Democracy carries risks, of course, including that of over-promising or blaming all of a country's ills on a particular group of people but adopting the citizen-based approach that democracy implies is the safest best for long-term stable and effective government. There is a strong correlation

between societies that are secure and prosperous and those that enjoy participative democracy.

The UK supports democracy worldwide because we believe it is the system of government that best allows for individual freedom. It rests on foundations that have to be built over time: strong institutions, responsible and accountable government, a free and responsible press, the rule of law and equal rights for men and women. The UK supports a wide range of democracy initiatives, including funding NGOs that increase citizen participation, promoting inclusion of marginalised groups, providing training for legal professionals, promoting freedom of expression and helping strengthen parliaments.

We all need to recognise that different societies have different responses to democracy. Rwanda has unique circumstances and history which has shaped the political system we see today. Models of democracy also cannot and should not be imposed by others and necessarily need time to take root. Democracy is an evolutionary process rather than a fixed end result. No model is perfect, and all remain works in progress.

Elections are rightly seen as important barometers of a country's democratic credentials. I was lucky enough to be an official observer in Muhanga district during the August Presidential elections and was pleased to see the people of Rwanda participating peacefully and in great numbers, with a result which I believe reflected the will of most Rwandans. I was particularly encouraged to see broader media coverage than in the last elections, and some instances of the obstruction of opposition candidates reported and addressed rapidly by the National Election Commission and the government.

I was concerned, however, by the lack of clarity in the registration process for candidates which appear to have made it impossible for certain credible candidates to register. Along with other international observers, I personally saw irregularities with the counting of ballots and vote tabulation. I know that the National Electoral Commission is committed to improving the system and I very much hope that Rwanda will take the opportunity to continue to amend its electoral processes in advance of the 2018 parliamentary elections as part of the democratic journey here. This is important not just for its own sake but for people's faith in the process.

I am concerned by the arrests and legal challenges in recent weeks. While Rwanda's political situation and recent terrible history is unique, it is concerning to see the targeting of opposition figures.

As diplomats, we are often (rightly) accused of focussing too much on the short term. If I step back, the progress Rwanda has made towards becoming a modern democracy during my four years in Kigali is clear. The transformation since the horrors of 1994 are nothing short of incredible. The UK is proud to be a friend and partner of Rwanda, and to play its part in assisting with Rwanda's democratic development.

End.

Press release: Foreign Secretary condemns new North Korea missile test

North Korea has conducted yet another illegal missile launch. The UK and the international community have condemned the aggressive and illegal actions of the North Korean regime, and the succession of missile and nuclear tests. We stand firmly by Japan and our other international partners.

We are working to mobilise world opinion with the aim of achieving a diplomatic solution to the situation on the Korean peninsula.

This week the most stringent UN sanctions regime placed on any nation in the 21st century was imposed on North Korea, after being unanimously agreed at the UN Security Council. These measures now need to be robustly enforced. We urge all states to play their part in changing the course North Korea is taking.