

## **Press release: Sir Alan Duncan statement on the Venezuelan National Assembly attack**

The Rt. Hon Alan Duncan, Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office said:

I deplore yesterday's attack on the democratically elected Venezuelan National Assembly and the aggression towards MPs by pro-government supporters. This unchecked violence is contemptible and unacceptable. I urge the Venezuelan Government to take appropriate measures to guarantee the safety of the National Assembly and all MPs.

The continued escalation of violence and lack of protection provided by Venezuelan law enforcement organisations to the National Assembly is a threat to the principles of democracy. I call on the Venezuelan Government to respect Venezuela's Constitution and the inviolability of its democratic institutions.

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## **Press release: Foreign investors see opportunities in Scotland**

This led to over 5,500 new jobs being created providing security and stability to thousands of families.

In another record year, the UK attracted 2,265 foreign direct investment projects which led to the creation of nearly 15,000 new jobs across the country.

UK Government Minister Dr Ian Duncan said:

Today's figures show that Scotland and the whole of the UK is continuing to be an attractive destination for foreign investors who are recognising that our skills and world class industries are second to none.

We want this trend to continue and see even more investment, and I would encourage businesses to work with the UK Government's Department for International Trade who support businesses to reach markets around the world through their global network of embassy-

based trade experts.

International Trade Secretary, Liam Fox, said:

These results are great news for Scotland. As world leaders across a range of sectors including life sciences, oil and gas and financial services, it's great to see foreign investors recognising the country's excellence.

As an international economic department, the Department for International Trade will continue to promote the UK as a whole to potential investors and support Scottish Development International to attract inward investment.

The figures published today show that the US retains the top spot accounting for 577 projects of all inward investment projects to the UK. China (including Hong Kong) remains in second place with 160 projects and last year's third place India is joined by Australia and New Zealand in joint third place with 127 projects each.

Demonstrating the diversity of the UK's economy, sectors that performed particularly well include technology, renewable energy, life sciences and the creative industries which all saw an increase in the number of projects.

As part of the government's drive to attract inward investment, in January this year the department launched a major global marketing campaign – Invest in GREAT Britain and Northern Ireland – to promote the UK's offering to international investors.

To date, the campaign has generated 1.4 million page views of the invest section of the great.gov.uk digital service and recorded over 540 prospective investor enquiries.

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## **Press release: Expert panel recommends further tests on cladding and insulation**

The independent expert panel on safety has advised further testing as the next step to be conducted in helping landlords to ensure the safety of their buildings.

These large scale tests will help establish how different types of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) panels in combination with different types of

insulation behave in a fire.

The results of these tests will help landlords make decisions on any further measures that may need to be put in place to make their buildings safe following the Grenfell Tower fire. These tests will be undertaken by the BRE and will not require any new samples from buildings.

Earlier this week the panel brought together a group of technical experts from a wide range of professions and organisations. The group [discussed the processes](#) that had been followed to identify whether buildings had ACM panels and the advice provided to building owners on [interim measures](#) and agreed that these were the right first steps.

The further tests – which will look at 3 different types of ACM cladding combined with different types of insulation – will be in accordance with British Standard 8414 in line with the panel's advice. This involves building a 9 metres tall demonstration wall with a complete cladding system – including panels and insulation – fixed to it, and then subjecting it to a fire that replicates a severe fire in a flat breaking out of a window and whether it then spread up the outside wall.

In addition, the Expert Advisory Panel recommended issuing further practical advice on immediate steps landlords can take to identify their wall materials including insulation, which will be published shortly.

The government has now commissioned the Building Research Establishment to undertake these tests as a matter of urgency. The results will be made publically available. Landlords will be expected to take their own professional advice on what is required for their buildings in the usual way.

The expert panel has concluded that 6 combinations of cladding systems should be subjected to the BS8414 test procedure. The detailed design of each of the 6, will be reviewed by the panel to ensure that it is representative of the systems that are in common use including the way it is fixed.

The 6 systems will incorporate each of the 3 common types of aluminium composite material panels, with core filler materials of unmodified polyethylene, fire retardant polyethylene, and non-combustible mineral. The 2 insulation materials used in the testing will be rigid polyisocyanurate foam or non-combustible mineral wool.

[This is stock footage of large scale testing](#)

Further practical advice on immediate steps landlords can take to identify their wall materials including insulation will be published on [www.gov.uk/dclg](http://www.gov.uk/dclg).

The appointment of the [Expert Panel](#) was announced on 27 June 2017. The initial meeting of the Expert Advisory Panel took place on Friday 29 June. Following that meeting the Panel called together experts on Monday 3 July 2017.

Read the [Explanatory note on safety checks and testing](#) published on 30 June

and the [advice provided to building owners on interim measures](#) published on 22 June.

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## **Press release: Brokenshire provides further details of political donations policy to MPs**

The Secretary of State has written to MPs to provide further details regarding the move to full transparency of donations and loans to NI political parties.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, has written to MPs to provide further details regarding the move to full transparency of donations and loans to Northern Ireland political parties. The letter, which was addressed to the shadow Secretary of State, Owen Smith MP, and placed in the libraries of both Houses, can be found [here](#).

In January, the Secretary of State wrote to the Northern Ireland parties to propose moving to full transparency and to seek views on the date from which transparency should take effect. The Secretary of State's letter and the responses of the parties, Electoral Commission and the Committee on Standards in Public Life can be found [here](#).

The change, which will be made by secondary legislation, would apply to all donations and loans received on or after 1 July 2017 and enable publication of donor information from the autumn. The proposed legislation is currently the subject of statutory consultation with the Electoral Commission.

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## **Press release: \$600 million support secures major UAE infrastructure contracts**

International Trade Secretary, Liam Fox, has announced that the UK's export credit agency, UK Export Finance (UKEF), will provide support to construction companies Carillion and Kier who have won contracts in the UAE worth hundreds of millions.

The announcement comes as the government has launched a [new initiative](#) bringing together the UK's leading firms from the infrastructure industry with government in a new partnership to help UK companies secure major international contracts.

## Infrastructure projects

UK construction firms Carillion and Kier will deliver new housing, a major stadium complex and one of the Emirates' biggest office developments. Specifically, Kier has won contracts for the construction of the Dubai Arena, a 17,000-seater entertainment and sports venue, and two staff accommodation buildings. UKEF will be guaranteeing \$455 million for Kier to carry out the projects.

Carillion, which is also a Queen's Award winner, will design and build the latest phase of 'One Central', Dubai World Trade Centre's new mixed-use development in Dubai's central business district. Carillion has already delivered the first and second phases of the development, and this new contract that will see them construct 2 new office towers thanks to UKEF support of \$180 million.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox said:

With these flagship infrastructure projects, Kier and Carillion are helping to directly shape Dubai's economy by boosting tourism and business infrastructure.

This is yet another example of the UK's global leadership in the infrastructure sector, and the Department for International Trade, as an international economic department, is proud to be helping these 2 outstanding firms succeed abroad with the backing of UK Export Finance.

Sean Fenner, Managing Director of Kier International, said:

The Dubai Arena and Nshama residential developments are remarkable projects that will transform Dubai's entertainment and accommodation sectors respectively.

The support of UK Export Finance has been instrumental in helping us win this business as we look to build on the substantial growth we've seen in international demand.

Zafar Khan, Group Finance Director at Carillion, added:

Our continuing involvement in the development of the Dubai Trade Centre District is evidence of our capabilities and reputation for high-quality construction. Winning high-quality contracts with the

support of UK Export Finance is central to our strategy in the Middle East.

## Further details

The Dubai Arena is a state-of-the-art multipurpose arena with a capacity of 17,000 persons which, when operational in 2019, will host major concerts and sports events. UK Export Finance has provided Meraas, the project sponsors, with \$220 million in finance to support Kier's contract to design and build the venue.

Kier has also won contracts to deliver 2 staff accommodation projects for Nshama, which UKEF will support with financing worth \$235 million. The buildings will create high-quality accommodation at a competitive price for employees of Emaar Properties.

This latest phase of the Dubai World Trade Centre is part of an 182,600 square metre development and includes 2 high-specification office buildings of 15 and 11 storeys. UKEF will provide \$180 million in finance to support Carillion's contract, and has already provided \$285 million in finance for the first and the second phases of the project which Carillion has completed.

The financing on all 3 projects has been provided in partnership with HSBC's Export and Specialised Finance team.

Richard Hodder, Global Head Export and Specialised Finance at HSBC, said:

The support required to deliver these major infrastructure contract wins reiterate the growing trend of developers in the UAE seeking export credit agency financing for complex projects. Each financing solution has a bespoke structure using innovative concepts that ensure it is aligned with the aspirations of all parties involved.

HSBC will continue to support UK contractors and further develop its strong relationship with UK Export Finance in the MENA region, following several collaborative successes in the UAE.