

News story: Foreign Secretary commits £4m to democracy in the Commonwealth

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has committed £4 million to support democratic accountability in parliaments across 18 Commonwealth developing countries.

The new funding will support work with democratic institutions such as national parliaments and local authorities to help improve transparency and foster more stable, democratic societies. The programme will focus on how institutions are accountable and inclusive of all their citizens, and on driving efforts to widen participation by women, minorities and other underrepresented groups.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

Britain is a champion of democracy and human rights across the world.

This £4 million will bring together experiences from across the Commonwealth, making democratic institutions more accountable and more inclusive.

Standing up for democracy and human rights is not only the right thing to do, robust democracies are essential to prosperity and help create a safer, more stable and progressive world.

The Inclusive and Accountable Democracy programme will set out guidelines on how parliaments can strengthen their processes. The two-year programme will cover Commonwealth developing countries across Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Safeguarding, promoting and defending human rights internationally is an important UK priority. This announcement follows Mr Johnson's £1 million commitment in November, to support and protect journalists and media professionals in countries where press freedom is under threat.

In addition to the Inclusive and Accountable Democracy programme the UK's Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy supports crucial frontline work across the globe.

Notes to editor:

- The programme will be managed by the FCO through a consortium led by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, partnering with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's UK Branch and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum.

Further information