

UN envoy strongly condemns attack on UN team near Nigeria-Cameroon border

1 February 2017 – Strongly condemning an attack against a United Nations monitoring team near the Nigeria-Cameroon border that resulted in the death of five persons, the UN envoy for West Africa and the Sahel region, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, called on both countries to take swift action to bring the perpetrators to justice.

According to preliminary reports, at around 14:00 hours, yesterday, an unknown armed group attacked a UN Technical Monitoring Team, killing five individuals – a UN independent contractor, three Nigerians nationals and one Cameroonian national – and injuring several others.

The team was conducting a field mission in the vicinity of Hosere Jongbi, near Kontcha, Cameroon, about 700 kilometres north of the capital Yaoundé, as part of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission mandate.

In a news release issued by the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mr. Chambas reiterated the vital role of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission in accomplishing the border demarcation, in compliance with a judgment of the International Court of Justice, and in contributing to stability and security in the region.

He also offered his condolences to the families of those killed in the attack and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

The Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission was established by the UN Secretary-General, at the request of Presidents of Cameroon and Nigeria, in 2002, to settle border issues between the two West African neighbours.

The Mixed Commission's mandate includes demarcation of the land boundary and delimitation of the maritime boundary between the two countries; withdrawal of troops and transfer of authority in the Lake Chad area, along the land boundary and in the Bakassi Peninsula; addressing the situation of populations affected by the demarcation activities; and development of recommendations on confidence-building measures aiming at promoting peaceful cross-border cooperation.

Press release: Minister for the Middle East statement on settlement units in

[the West Bank](#)

From:

First published:

1 February 2017

Part of:

Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood statement on the Israeli Government's announcement to build 3,000 settlement units in the West Bank.

Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood said:

The announcement of further settlement units in the West Bank is part of a growing trend which we condemn. We have consistently been clear that settlements are illegal under international law, and not conducive to peace. This spike in settlement activity undermines trust and makes a two state solution – with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign – much harder to achieve.

Further information

[Deals sealed on last three available residential sites on SA1 Swansea Waterfront](#)

Contracts have been exchanged between the Welsh Government and Hale Homes – a family run company based in Neath – and with DT Technical Solutions, from Ebbw Vale.

Heads of Terms have also been agreed with a social housing group that is working up proposals for a 1.3 acre site – the last remaining site on the residential quarter.

This is the second development on SA1 being carried out by Hale Homes and will see 23 town houses built on a one acre site on a prime location. The energy efficient townhouses will be 3 1/2 storeys high with a balcony that spans the entire width of the roof space providing superb views.

DT Technical Solutions is to build 18 town houses on an adjacent half acre site.

National housebuilder Persimmon Homes West Wales is currently onsite constructing a £6m residential development of 37 new town houses and 24 apartments. Coastal Housing Group's latest £5.5m development is also underway and will provide a range of affordable 1 and 2 bedroom apartments as well as 22 three and four bedroom homes for sale. Both have previously developed a range of new homes on SA1.

There is now only one remaining residential plot on SA1 which is currently used as storage for dredged sand and is expected to become available on the market in 2018.

SA1 has proved to be a popular development attracting investment by local and national developers as well as housing associations that have built a wide range of accommodation offering a diverse variety of architectural styles.

To date 643 apartments, houses and retirement homes have been completed, with a further 133 under construction. Of this total 213 units will be 'affordable housing'.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

"SA1 is transforming 96 acres of disused dockland into a dynamic and vibrant new mixed-use quarter for the city and has acted as a catalyst attracting significant investment into Swansea, helping to raise the city's profile as a great place to live, work and invest.

"I am particularly pleased that the proportion of modern, high quality affordable homes – built by the private sector and housing associations – is more than double the percentage required under planning obligations.

"The residential development on SA1 has helped the Welsh Government meet its affordable housing targets and will continue to contribute to the latest target of delivering 20,000 affordable homes during this term of Government."

Jonathan Hale said:

"Welsh Government were extremely helpful when we built our first phase at SA1, the townhouses in question were the first houses built at SA1 and were a resounding success.

Agents who have been acting for Welsh Government are Cushman & Wakefield.

[News story: Kestrel close encounter](#)

From:

First published:

1 February 2017

Part of:

A kestrel has taken a shine to a Highways England CCTV camera stand on junction 11a of the M5.

With their pointed wings and long tails, kestrels are a familiar sight along UK motorways and main roads as they use thermals from the road to hover while they look for prey.

Now one of them has discovered their perfect perch – on a Highways England CCTV camera stand.

[Kestrel video](#)

Our Traffic Officers Leigh Goodchild and Steve Dyas first spotted this cheeky kestrel while monitoring traffic flows in October 2016. Since then they have been treated to frequent sightings – and have grown fond of their new friend.

We have released this video to coincide with the RSPB's [Big School Bird Watch](#), which encourages pupils to get closer to nature by counting birds at set times.

Kestrels are on the RSPB amber list of protected species, with only around 46,000 breeding pairs estimated to be in the UK. They are most recognisable in their characteristic hovering hunting mode but also like to find a high perch where they can stay on the lookout for prey.

Our CCTV camera platform seems to fit the bill. Traffic Officer Leigh said:

On one occasion she returned with half a mouse, which she promptly swallowed tail and all!

She's rather obsessed with her own image but her inquisitiveness has given us some good close-ups.

She's squawked and attacked the lens a few times as well. When that happens we discourage her from hurting herself by tilting the camera skywards.

Her visits certainly brighten up our day and make a change from the

traffic.

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