

Signing of MoU with the Sustainable Finances Roundtable

World news story

The British Embassy in Asuncion and the Sustainable Finances Roundtable (MSF) signed an agreement that backs sustainable development.



Photo courtesy of the MSF: President Omar Fernandez and Ambassador Ramin Navai sign the MoU

On occasion of its ten-year anniversary, the Sustainable Finances Roundtable (MFS for its acronym in Spanish) of Paraguay signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British Embassy in Asunción, with the aim of strengthening climate action and international cooperation. The event took place on 5 October at the Talleyrand Jade Park with the attendance of senior executives of the national private banking sector.

From this MoU, both parties agreed to work together to promote sustainable finance as a key instrument to catalyse sustainable, low-carbon and resilient development to the adverse effects of climate change. At the same time, the cooperation framework will enable joint efforts to exchange experiences, strengthen capacities and build a more inclusive financial system.

Senior representatives from more than ten banks had the opportunity to exchange perspectives with representatives of IDB Invest, part of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group, and the Netherlands Development Bank (FMO).

British Ambassador Ramin Navai congratulated the MFS team for ten years of work promoting sustainable finance. At the same time, he took the opportunity to stress that this decade is decisive in establishing the necessary structures for a clean, prosperous and healthy future for all. He added:

Laying the foundations for a sustainable future depends not only on governments, but also on all sectors, including the financial

sector.

At the international level, the mobilisation of the financial sector around global climate objectives has become increasingly important. For example, in the context of the UK presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), the Glasgow Finance Alliance for Zero Net Emissions (GFANZ) launched.

Financial partnerships such as the MoU between the British Embassy in Asuncion and the MSF enable institutions to pool and collaborate with each other to mobilise resources to stop the irreparable damage of climate change.

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[Science Minister in Italy for first meeting with European Space Agency](#)

This week (Monday 17 October), recently appointed Minister for Science and Investment Security Nusrat Ghani arrived at the European Space Agency (ESA)'s Centre for Earth Observation to meet with ESA's Director General Josef Aschbacher, and Austrian Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility and Technology, Leonore Gewessler.

Minister Ghani was joined by UK Space Agency CEO Paul Bate for the visit, the Minister's first trip outside the UK since being appointed in her ministerial position within the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

The meeting with Dr. Aschbacher came ahead of this year's ESA Council of Ministers (CMIN22), set to take place in November, at which member states look to invest in the next evolution of ESA missions and programmes, and at which the UK contribution to ESA will be confirmed.

November's Ministerial council will present an exciting opportunity to help set the future direction of ESA, and to achieve an outcome for the UK that delivers on our [National Space Strategy](#) (NSS) objectives while driving growth and supporting safety and sustainability on Earth.

Minister for Science and Investment Security Nusrat Ghani said:

I am proud to be representing the UK space sector as we discuss our ambitions ahead of the ESA Council of Ministers next month. There are a series of important programmes on the table, and I want to harness opportunities in space to grow the UK economy, create jobs and inspire young people into STEM careers.

It was important to me that my first international trip was with ESA and I look forward to the Council of Ministers meeting in November and campaigning for 2025 UK Presidency.

We're also making new funding available now to strengthen the UK's position as a world leader in the satellite communications market, and I look forward to seeing the results of the competition.

Having committed £374 million per year over five years to ESA in 2019, the UK's investment and collaboration with the agency is of significant value to the economy and domestic sector, illustrated by new [UK Space Agency report](#) findings published this week, which find that for every £1 invested, ESA will generate an overall return of £11.80 for the UK economy.

The visit to Italy also coincided with Minister Ghani's unveiling of a [new £15 million fund](#) for UK businesses to revolutionise satellite communications technology. The competition will prioritise customer needs, support sustainable growth and catalyse further investment into the UK space sector, which already employs 47,000 people.

The trip was indicative of the UK's strong commitment to the space and R&D sector both at home and across Europe. The UK's European and global partnerships form an essential part of this government's ambitions in the field as we begin to explore the possibility of bidding for the ESA presidency for 2025, continue to advocate for our association to the Horizon Europe research programme, and look ahead to a busy pipeline of bilateral engagements across R&D.

[Mali's actions and statements call into question its commitment to partnership with the UN](#)

Thank you, President, and thank you, SRSW Wane, for your insights, your leadership of MINUSMA and the hard work of your team in the toughest of circumstances. I join others in expressing our deepest condolences following the deaths of the four Chadian peacekeepers in Kidal. I also welcome the participation of Foreign Minister Diop in our meeting and express condolences for the deaths of civilians and military losses on the Malian side.

Mr. President, when the Council met to discuss Mali in June, we encouraged the transitional authorities to continue engaging with ECOWAS on an election timetable. Since then, agreement has been reached, sanctions lifted and some positive steps made toward elections. The peace agreement monitoring committee has also met for the first time in over a year. As these endeavours

move forward, we hope the authorities will ensure inclusive processes, particularly of women and young people, while promoting dialogue.

We understand the Malian authorities are dealing with multiple challenges. AQ and IS-affiliated groups continue to expand their territory, preying on communities and attacking military bases. The 40% increase in cases of conflict-related sexual violence reported by the Secretary-General is a shocking illustration of just how urgent it is to improve human rights protection.

But the terror imposed by these groups must not be countered with a military response that itself fails to protect civilians and their human rights. In August, the UN Independent Expert on human rights in Mali reported violations committed by Malian forces alongside – and I quote – ‘foreign military personnel described as Russian military officials’. The malign presence of the Wagner Group can no longer be ignored or denied.

All perpetrators of human rights abuses and violations must be held accountable. Without accountability and justice, trust cannot be rebuilt and grievances will endure. MINUSMA must be granted unrestricted access to investigate human rights allegations independently. Mali’s statement in June that the authorities would not guarantee the mission’s freedom to achieve this was deeply concerning and it is part of a pattern of actions and statements that call into question Mali’s commitment to full partnership with MINUSMA. We urge the authorities to work constructively with the mission, lifting restrictions and facilitating the vital work of peacekeepers.

The United Kingdom remains a strong supporter of MINUSMA and its mission. The UN’s forthcoming review of MINUSMA will need to answer some fundamental questions. These include whether and how the mission can maintain a viable presence in Mali. The review should present credible options reflecting realities on the ground. We look forward to engaging with colleagues on this in the coming weeks.

[Trade Secretary speech at Netherlands trade mission in London](#)

Good afternoon everyone.

Thank you Ambassador and thank you Liesje for that excellent speech and also an extra special thank you to the Dutch government for organising this event. I think it’s going to be very successful. It’s good to see you all here.

What I’d start off by saying is welcome to Tobacco Dock. This is a symbol of our trading past. It’s a modern building now, but I think if you can imagine 200 years ago what it would have looked like, full of barrels shipped from

all over the world – some no doubt from the Netherlands.

Today it's great to see it filled not with barrels but with people, and more importantly with businesses who are helping to shape our shared economic future. The future of the UK and the Netherlands are aligned. Our success relies on each other's success.

It's wonderful to see you all here because it's the symbolic nature of the steady stream of Dutch firms that are making the UK their home.

In the last year Heineken and the chemicals company DSM, have injected tens of millions of pounds into their UK operations, creating hundreds of jobs...

And smaller Dutch firms, in some of the sectors represented here today, like the e-bike manufacturers Van Moof and Ebke, are investing on this side of the North Sea too.

The UK and the Netherlands exchanged almost £88 billion of goods and services in the year ending March – that makes the Netherlands our fourth largest trading partner.

And by our most recent reckoning, Dutch business make up over 10pc of this country's foreign direct inward investment.

But, as we're finding today, we can achieve more.

I want you to know that we want companies, like yours, pioneers in new forms of transport, AI and data analytics, to flourish in our country.

Why? First, because you will help drive the growth that will support our long-term economic security for both countries.

Second, because your ideas and expertise will maintain the UK's place as a technological trail blazer, helping to future proof us against a changing world.

But I must emphasise, it is not a one-way street because we have something to offer as well.

In return we can offer you one of the best places in the world for an innovative business to call home.

We have four of the world's top universities.

We have a growing, energetic talent pool...

We've committed through our National Infrastructure Strategy to invest in roads, railways and internet connections – making it easier for businesses both in the UK and the Netherlands to set up and thrive.

And we've created a pro ambition, pro business regulatory environment.

We're also looking at how we can unlock opportunities in some of your sectors today:

For example, last year we launched our AI Strategy, which spells out how we will support the sector and harness its advances.

I'm sure my international trade team at the back of the room will be delighted to talk more about this.

They're a great team. Over the last three years, they've helped Dutch businesses to invest in scores of projects in this country – creating over 8,000 jobs.

Of course, today is also a reminder of the strength of the UK-Dutch relationship.

Britain's prosperity didn't come about by accident.

It was built through a commitment to democracy, free markets and strong and mutually-beneficial partnerships, like the one we share with the Netherlands.

We are both monarchies, long-standing allies, and our friendship has lasted from the era of Erasmus to the age of AI.

For many years now, British expats have been making each other's country home.

Our universities welcome students from either side of the North Sea and our academic collaborations, like the one between the Universities of York and Maastricht, are advancing knowledge in critical areas like medical technology and data science.

The UK and the Netherlands work together to make the world a better place.

For over six decades, our Royal Navy has prepared large numbers of Royal Dutch Navy warships so they're ready for operations around the world.

Today we're together standing up for freedom by imposing economic sanctions on Russia following its invasion of Ukraine...and our businesses are collaborating on major clean energy projects that will help us keep the lights on.

We don't have many differences. But like any good friends, when we come across issues, we work through them.

So, I know that there is great potential for our relationship to hit new heights.

As two old friends with a love of enterprise, innovation and independence...we have a real opportunity to create an even deeper and more productive trading partnership, that will serve us both well in future.

I've just been discussing our shared priorities with Liesje in our meeting earlier.

And I'm looking forward to continuing the conversation about how we can make

it even easier for us to cooperate.

I'll end by saying that this trade mission is the latest in a long list of pioneering and productive collaborations between our nations...

In the sixteenth century, the Dutch philosopher Erasmus, discussed with the English scholar Sir Thomas More, ideas that would shape our societies.

In the 19th century, Vincent van Gogh was inspired by his stay in London to paint and influenced countless artists around the world.

And your businesses, with their amazing advances, show how together we can push forward the boundaries of progress in the 21st.

Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth once said that our nations are: Innovators, traders and internationalists.

That's been true for five centuries. And from everything I've seen here today, I know it is more the case now than ever before.

So, I'll wish you all a fantastic trade mission. And every success for the future. Thank you.

Construction begins on brand new flagship London court in the Square Mile

- New civic quarter will increase the number of courtrooms from 8 to 18 in the City of London
- Lord Chancellor unveils foundation stones of new court and police station
- The court's foundation stone will be the first to be inscribed with 'KC' in over 70 years

The Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary, Brandon Lewis, unveiled the foundation stones at the construction site today (18 October 2022).

The City of London Law courts will be a modern, efficient and flexible centre for London's legal services, providing a total of 18 hearing rooms, an increase of 10 on the courts they will replace in 2026. This consists of 8 Crown, six civil and four magistrates' courtrooms. The court will focus on high-level fraud, cyber and economic crime.

It forms part of wider HM Courts and Tribunals Service estate investment, with £105 million spent during 2021 to 2022 to transform courts and tribunals

across England and Wales.

Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary, Brandon Lewis, said:

The City of London Law courts represent a vision of how justice will work in future – with modern, innovative and flexible courts in fit for purpose buildings.

The Salisbury Square development symbolises our place as one of the leading centres for business, law and justice as we ensure that the UK remains attractive to global business and investment.

The court's foundation stone is the first in the courts estate to be laid under the reign of King Charles III and the first to be inscribed with 'KC' – 'King's Counsel' – in over 70 years.

Developed by The City of London Corporation, Salisbury Square creates a new civic quarter in the Square Mile, bringing together first-class legal and law enforcement facilities. It will generate 400 new jobs and support 2,100 more, enhancing the UK's reputation as a global destination for business and investment. Once complete, it will see millions invested into the City of London's economy, thanks to the global appeal of the UK's legal services.

Policy Chairman at the City of London Corporation, Chris Hayward, said:

Fraud is now the most common crime in the UK, costing the economy billions every year and causing misery for businesses and individuals.

By strengthening our capability to crack down on economic crime, we will enhance the City's reputation as a world-leading location to do business and keep consumers across the UK safe from fraud.

The Salisbury Square Development will play a vital role in ensuring we can adapt to the changing demands of policing and delivering justice, supporting the UK economy and helping attract international business.

The new building will provide ease of access for all those that use the court, from legal professionals to victims. Facilities will include lifts and wide corridors that provide access for wheelchair users, helping to ensure there are as few barriers as possible for people with disabilities or limited mobility.

The court will be fitted out with all available courtroom technology, with screens and cameras enabling courtrooms to seamlessly transmit and receive video evidence with other court locations.

The court complex has a lifespan of 125 years – triple the design life of a

typical building – and sustainability is at the core of its construction, with the new court to run on clean energy sources. It will include an all-electric heating and cooling system provided by 300 metre deep thermal piles to store summer heat below ground for reuse in the winter months. The highly insulated external facades reduce the winter energy demand whilst façade solar shading reduces the cooling required in the summer. Materials will be reclaimed from the buildings that have been demolished for reuse in the new construction.

Designed by Eric Parry Architects, Salisbury Square also includes a new headquarters for the City of London Police, as well as a commercial building. The development will rejuvenate its historic surroundings, forming a gathering place for people to enjoy with outdoor seating and new shops, bars and restaurants.