

North Korea ballistic missile test: FCDO statement

Press release

A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson statement on North Korea's ballistic missile test on 6 October.



A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:

North Korea's decision to conduct a further ballistic missile test on 6 October is a violation of UN Security Council Resolutions. The UK continues to work closely with our partners to urge North Korea to return to dialogue and take credible steps towards denuclearisation in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

We call on North Korea to prioritise the well-being of their people instead of the illegal pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

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Croydon man's killers have sentences increased for murderous attack

News story

The two men have each received an increased prison sentence for murder



Two men who fatally stabbed a Croydon man have had their sentences increased after the Court of Appeal found their original sentences to be unduly lenient.

On 15 December 2019, Donald Owusu, now 25, and Harvey Macfoy, now 26, used a tracker device to locate 33-year-old Albert Amofa as they believed he was carrying cannabis in his vehicle. The victim was located outside his home in his vehicle and stabbed five times to the upper leg hitting his femoral artery. Owusu and Macfoy fled the scene empty handed. Mr Amofa died from his injuries two days later.

On 7 July 2022 at Central Criminal Court, Donald Owusu was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder with a minimum term of 25 years. Harvey Macfoy was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder with a minimum term of 21 years. Macfoy received an additional 20-month sentence to run concurrently for intending to pervert the course of justice.

The original sentences were referred to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme because they appeared too low.

On 6 October, the Court of Appeal found Owusu and Macfoy's sentences to be unduly lenient and increased Owusu's minimum sentence to 27 years' imprisonment and Macfoy's to 23 years' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, HM Solicitor General Michael Tomlinson MP said:

The senseless and vicious murder of Albert Amofa has caused immeasurable pain and suffering to his family, and my thoughts are with them today.

I welcome the Court's decision to increase both sentences today as I believe they better reflect the intent behind this awful attack.

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Serving the Veteran better – MOD's Veterans UK welcomes veterans feedback on its services

News story

For MOD's Veterans UK, listening to and learning about how veterans access and experience their services is extremely important.



A veteran gets his point across during the event

At a recent Lived Experience event – an opportunity for small groups of veterans and their advocates to discuss their experiences – senior leaders and staff from across the organisation welcomed a cross section of veterans to share their feedback and suggestions directly.

The face-to-face event was held in late September with a group of veterans, and representatives from MOD Policy, Medical Advisors and operational and communications staff.

Nina Cope, MOD Chief Operating Officer (pictured left) talks to veterans during a break

Veterans UK is responsible for administering compensation and pensions schemes for both serving personnel, veterans and their families, as well as providing the Veterans Welfare and Defence Transition Services. The purpose of the event was to listen to the individuals and learn from their experiences of using these services and schemes.

This direct engagement forms part of our commitment to continuously improve and Veterans UK are now working with policy and other partners on the feedback received and how it can be used to inform the continuous improvement

of the user experience.

Brigadier Caroline Hull (centre) facilitates the face-to-face Lived Experience Event

Brigadier Caroline Hull, Head of DBS Armed Forces and Veterans Services said:

“We know we need to be doing things better and whilst the teams in Veterans UK are working their hardest to get things right, this doesn’t always happen. We are here to learn, we are determined to improve, and we welcome the support of those who have voluntarily given up their time to support us.”

In Veterans UK we recognise there is more to be done as we continue to improve the experiences for serving personnel and veterans using our services. We want to be transparent and by sharing our processes is one way we have done that via the [Customer Journey Maps](#) and bite-size videos on [how to make a compensation claim](#). Similar helpful and informative products are planned for the rest of 2022 and beyond.

For updates on all Veterans UK led initiatives, follow @modveteransuk on Facebook.

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[Ambassador Manley statement on Xinjiang](#)

World news story

Ambassador Simon Manley, Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, made the below comments following the vote on whether the UN Human Rights Council should hold a debate on the situation of human rights in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China.



UK Government

Ambassador Simon Manley, the UK's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, said:

Given the gravity of the report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights which found that China has carried out serious human rights violations including possible 'crimes against humanity' in Xinjiang, it is important that UN members are given the opportunity to consider it fully. China's attempts to stifle debate and hide the truth will not succeed.

Today's vote sent a clear message to China: that a significant number of countries will not be silenced when it comes to egregious human rights violations – no matter where and by whom they are committed. We will continue to work with our partners to hold the Chinese authorities to account and to shine a spotlight on China's human rights violations.

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Cocaine supplier receives increased sentence after hearing at the Court of Appeal

News story

The offender acted as a courier to drive 90kg of cocaine from Surrey to London



A man who acted as a courier to transport 90kg of cocaine has been ordered to serve a longer prison term after the Court of Appeal found his original sentence to be unduly lenient.

Sam Whicker, now 31, was part of an organised crime group involved in the supply of class A drugs (cocaine). Whicker acted as a courier and drove 90kg of cocaine from Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, to Northolt, West London.

In addition to this offence, Whicker also has 38 previous convictions for 71 offences.

On 6 July 2022, Whicker was sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment at Southwark Crown Court for being concerned in the supply of a class A drug (cocaine). Whicker was also ordered to forfeit the drugs and vehicle for destruction.

Following the sentencing, Whicker's sentence was referred to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

On 6 October 2022, the Court found Whicker's original sentence to be unduly lenient, and he was ordered to serve a new sentence of 5 years and 4 months' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, HM Solicitor General Michael Tomlinson MP said:

Supplying class A drugs, especially given the significant quantity involved in this case, is an incredibly serious crime, so it was clear to me that a stronger sentence was appropriate in this case.

Today's verdict shows that no amount of money offered to supply and transport drugs will ever be worth it.

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