

# UN Human Rights Council 51: Statement for the Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's Oral Update on Ukraine

Thank you Mr President.

Thank you Director for your admirably objective update.

Two weeks ago the Commission of Inquiry confirmed that war crimes have indeed been committed in Ukraine, days after the liberation of areas in Kharkiv oblast revealed yet more Russian atrocities.

Last week, President Putin purported to annex four regions of Ukraine – a blatant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and of international law – and then used Russia's veto to try to avoid the scorn of the Security Council.

Today, you have made clear the horrors and the scope of Putin's violations of human rights law and international law in the course of his war of aggression.

Hospitals, schools, places of worship destroyed. Millions denied their basic rights to health, education and religion or belief.

Sexual violence and rape, including of children. Civilians shot dead in the street trying to gather fuel, food or medicine.

There are apparently no limits to Putin's disregard for International Law, or to the Ukrainian people's unspeakable suffering. And in Russia, those enough to protest the war and mobilisation face arrest and abuse in detention. Aggression abroad, repression at home.

There is one simple way to end the suffering in Ukraine. President Putin: bring your troops home. End the war. Respect the law.

Director,

Faced with Russia's continued flouting of international law, how can the OHCHR minimise the devastating impact on ordinary people.

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# Minister sees transformational transport project

The Porth Transport Interchange will improve facilities for bus and rail passengers and create a gateway to Porth town centre. The scheme will include 7 operational bus bays, 2 lay over spaces and EV charging capabilities.

The project is part of the Metro Plus Programme – a £50 million programme of schemes supporting the wider South Wales Metro plan, which will transform transport and travel across the wider region.

The UK Government has contributed £125m to the South Wales Metro through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. In addition, the Porth Transport Interchange project has received £3.5m in Levelling Up Funding from the UK Government.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales, David TC Davies said:

It's great to see construction underway on projects that will have a huge benefit for the area and its people and businesses. A modern, green, seamless transport system is vital for supporting jobs and prosperity, and the UK Government is proud to help fund this work.

The Metro is an ambitious multi-million project to integrate rail, bus, cycling and walking, improve connectivity and make sustainable travel easier across South Wales. The projects are wide-ranging; from establishing new park and ride facilities with EV charging on-site, to new rail and bus interchanges equipped with secure bike parking and easier access. In Cardiff, for instance, new infrastructure will enable 20% of the capital's commuters to travel by bus by 2030.

Chief Operating Officer Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Rhys Thomas said:

Transforming our infrastructure, connectivity and mode of transport is absolutely critical to the sustainability and future success of South East Wales. That's why we are committed to investing in programmes like Metro Plus, as they play a key role in contributing toward this ambition. The Porth Transport Hub is a great example of the transformational programmes that are reshaping our region. It's a catalyst for the regeneration of the Porth town centre, bringing together bus and rail services for the very first time, making public transport far more accessible – and making a real difference to the people of Porth.

RCT Cabinet Member for Development and Prosperity, Cllr Mark Norris said:

The improvements to public transport are vital to support jobs and prosperity in South Wales. The region accounts for about 50% of the total economic output of Wales, and it is home for almost half the total population of the country.

Ensuring infrastructure is fit for the future will have a significant economic impact, improving lives and helping to achieve the UK Government's aim of levelling up communities.

**ENDS**

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## [Nuclear Decommissioning Authority calls for applicants for its 2023 PhD bursaries](#)

News story

The NDA is looking for research proposals related to nuclear decommissioning for its 2023 PhD Bursary Call.



The PhD bursary scheme is key in ensuring we have the right skills and capabilities which support decommissioning.

The £750,000 of sponsorship is part of ongoing R&D support to develop the technical skills needed for decommissioning in the future.

Around 8 proposals will be chosen from a shortlist of entries that will be reviewed by technical specialists from the Nuclear Waste and Decommissioning Research Forum (NWDRF).

Experts look for proposals that support the NDA mission to deliver safe, sustainable and publicly acceptable solutions to the challenge of

decommissioning and clean-up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy.

Dr Rick Short, Research Manager at the NDA, said:

This year we're looking for proposals which tie into the NDA's key strategic themes and how they might be applied to our decommissioning challenges across our sites.

This scheme is key in ensuring we have the key skills and capabilities which support decommissioning over future generations. We're looking forward to seeing the proposals.

Applicants have until 15:00 on Friday 25 November 2022 to submit their proposals. The winning entries will be chosen by April 2023 with a view to the projects starting in September 2023.

[Find out more or apply.](#)

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## **Royal visit to DRC shows urgent need to tackle sexual violence in conflict**

- Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex, accompanied by FCD0 Minister of State, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the UK Prime Minister's Special Representative for Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict (PSVI), visits a ground-breaking foundation for survivors run by Nobel Prize Laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege.
- This is the first visit by a member of the Royal family to DRC.
- The visit comes ahead of a major global conference on PSVI being hosted in London in November by the UK Government, which Her Royal Highness will attend.

The Countess of Wessex is visiting the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), accompanied by Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office Minister of State Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, to raise awareness of the urgent need to tackle sexual violence in conflict in the DRC and around the world.

For Her Royal Highness, the visit is part of a long-standing commitment to championing this issue.

Lord Ahmad as the UK Prime Minister's Special Representative for PSVI, joined her on the visit to gain a deeper and practical insight into DRC's experiences of tackling conflict-related sexual violence, and identify

lessons learned to share at a global PSVI Conference in the UK next month.

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Dr Denis Mukwege welcomed them to his groundbreaking foundation in Bukavu. The Panzi Foundation has transformed the lives of thousands of women who have suffered sexual violence in the armed conflict and violence in DRC. The Foundation provides medical care, legal assistance, psychological support and economic programmes to offer a holistic model of care for survivors of these horrific crimes.

The Countess of Wessex and Lord Ahmad saw first-hand the difference the Panzi Foundation has made to women's lives during the first ever visit by a member of the Royal family to DRC.

The UK will host a major international conference in London in November, marking 10 years since the launch of PSVI, an initiative which Lord Ahmad now leads. The conference will bring together the UK and its partners around the world to review progress made in the last decade, identify shared challenges and agree further action.

Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

Sexual violence in conflict continues to shatter lives and scar communities around the world. Tackling it is a top priority for the UK and we will continue to work with our partners to provide better support for survivors, bring perpetrators to justice and encourage partners to share new ideas and experiences of tackling sexual violence in conflict at the conference in November.

Since 2012, we have committed over £50 million to support projects around the world that help prevent conflict-related sexual violence, including in the DRC. This includes providing £2.7 million to the Global Survivors Fund, whose projects in the DRC have supported over 1000 survivors.

Dr Mukwege, Founder of the Panzi Hospital and Foundation, and President of the Global Survivors Fund, said:

My staff and I are grateful for the visit of Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex and Lord Tariq Ahmad. Too often, the world turns a blind eye towards the suffering of survivors, especially here in DRC. Their visit will highlight the ongoing critical work to end conflict-related sexual violence, both in this country and around the globe.

During the visit to eastern DRC, The Countess of Wessex and Lord Ahmad met with survivors of sexual violence, and civil society organisations in Bukavu to gain an understanding of the challenges they face.

In Kinshasa, Her Royal Highness and Lord Ahmad will also meet President Felix

Tshisekedi and First Lady Denise Tshisekedi, the Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Christophe Lutundula, and other Ministers, for discussions on sexual violence in conflict, the UK's international conference, and other important issues such as climate change.

#### Notes to editors

- Photography of the visit will be available from the Press Association.
- Since its launch in 2019, the UK has provided £2.7m to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF). Its projects in DRC have supported over 1000 survivors to access health and psychological care, education, or support for economic enterprises.
- Last year the UK provided \$140,000 to help the Panzi Foundation to increase access to legal advice and mediation for survivors.
- In recent years, UK support to TRIAL International in DRC has provided free legal advice to survivors, strengthened capacity in the country to investigate, document and litigate effectively against crimes, and helped to tackle the culture of impunity.
- Between 2021-2022, the UK provided over £500,000 to the UN Team of Experts on conflict related sexual violence (CRSV) to increase the capacity of the DRC investigative and judicial authorities to investigate and prosecute CRSV crimes; and ensure judicial decisions on reparations are enforced. For instance, this funding supported training for police, special protection units, civil and military prosecutors and judges on the investigation and prosecution of CRSV cases, and on ensuring protection measures for victims and witnesses are in place. UK funding to World Vision supported community discussions in DRC led by religious leaders on the principles of the Declaration of Humanity, which challenge the stigma that survivors of sexual violence face.

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## [Andrew Ballheimer, Kalpana Desai and Mahnaz Safa join the Board of UK Government Investments as Non-Executive Directors](#)

UK Government Investments Ltd (UKGI), the government's centre of excellence in corporate governance and corporate finance, announces the appointments of Andrew Ballheimer, Kalpana Desai and Mahnaz Safa to the UKGI Board, for three-year terms until 21 September 2025.

#### **Andrew Ballheimer**

From 2016 until the end of his term in April 2020, Andrew Ballheimer was the Global Managing Partner of Allen & Overy LLP where he shaped and delivered

strategy whilst driving forward the performance of the business, including on diversity and inclusion initiatives. Andrew has more than 35 years of legal experience advising multinational corporations and global financial institutions, including in other senior leadership positions at Allen & Overy, as Global Co-Head of Corporate and UK Managing Partner of Corporate. Following his retirement from A&O (at the end of 2020), Andrew joined the board of Factor Law Inc. and the M&A Global Advisory Board at AON PLC. He has been a trustee of Moorfields Eye Charity since 2011, as well as a member of the U.K. Trade and Business Commission, and he is also a Senior Advisor at Teneo Strategy Limited.

### **Kalpana Desai**

Kalpana Desai is currently a Non-Executive Director of Janus Henderson plc, in addition to being a Founding Trustee of the Future is Bright Charitable Trust. Previously, Kalpana was a member of the Takeovers and Mergers Panel of the Securities and Futures Commission in Hong Kong from 2007 to 2014, and was a Non-Executive Director at Canaccord Genuity Group Inc. from 2015-2019. Kalpana has over 30 years of international advisory and investment banking experience. Until 2013, she was Chief Executive of Macquarie Capital Asia, the investment banking division of Macquarie Group Limited. Prior to this, she was Head of the Asia-Pacific Mergers & Acquisitions Group and a Managing Director from 2001 in the Investment Banking Division of Bank of America Merrill Lynch based in Hong Kong. Kalpana qualified as a Chartered Accountant with PricewaterhouseCoopers in London in 1991, and graduated with a BSc Economics from the London School of Economics.

### **Mahnaz Safa**

Mahnaz Safa has extensive commercial and regulatory experience from across the private and public sectors. With 30 years in finance, Mahnaz has advised boards on restructuring, capital raising, financing, strategy, board succession and crisis management; in sectors including retail, energy, infrastructure, technology and asset management. Mahnaz has been a senior executive at UBS, Citi and ANZ. As an executive Mahnaz has led and transformed large scale complex financial businesses and whilst at UBS and Citi, she co-chaired their respective women's leadership executive committees. Mahnaz currently serves on the board of Jefferies International Limited as a Non-Executive Director and is member of the Council at Imperial College where she is the Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. She has previously served as a senior independent director on the board of Alternative Credit Investments FTSE 250. Mahnaz holds a PhD in computer aided technology from Imperial College.

Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Griffith said:

I am delighted to welcome Andrew Ballheimer, Kalpana Desai and Mahnaz Safa as new non-executive directors of UK Government Investments.

Their extensive background and experience will be an invaluable

asset to the UKGI board as it supports the government in delivering more growth, jobs, and investment across the UK.

I look forward to working with them and the rest of the UKGI board in the months ahead.

Vindi Banga, UKGI Chairman, said

I am delighted that three such high-calibre appointees will be joining the UKGI Board. Each have a variety of skills and experience in different sectors which will prove invaluable for the Board in ensuring UKGI delivers against its strategy and its objectives.

I very much look forward to working closely with each of them over the coming years.

These appointments are regulated by the Commissioner for Public appointments (OCPA) and are made in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments published by the Cabinet Office. These appointments are made on merit and political activity played no part in the decision process. In accordance with the code, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any declared) to be made public. Andrew Ballheimer, Kalpana Desai and Mahnaz Safa did not declare any political activity.

### **Further information**

UKGI is the government's centre of excellence in corporate governance and corporate finance. It provides expert advice and leading solutions that inform and translate government's decisions into effective outcomes in the national interest.

UKGI acts as shareholder for, and leads the establishment of, UK government arm's length bodies; it advises on all major UK government corporate finance matters, including financial interventions into corporate structures and corporate finance negotiations; it analyses and advises on the UK government's contingent liabilities; and it acquires, manages and executes the sale of all significant UK government corporate assets.

UKGI is owned by HM Treasury and independently managed with a Board comprised predominantly of independent non-executive directors. UKGI works closely with both the private and public sectors, advising and interacting with ministers, Parliament and Whitehall departments.