

Joint statement on reconciliation processes in Jubaland

World news story

International partners signed a joint statement welcoming the dialogue between the Jubaland administration and the leadership of the Jubaland Council for Change.



Joint Press Statement

The below statement was signed by United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, United States and the United Nations.

We, the undersigned international partners welcome the dialogue between the Jubaland administration and the leadership of the Jubaland Council for Change which culminated in a reconciliation agreement signed on 23 April.

Disputed electoral outcomes in Jubaland and other Federal Member States over the past 18 months underscore the importance of credible electoral processes in which Somalis may choose their leaders in accordance with the Provisional Federal Constitution and Federal Member State constitutions.

We encourage all Jubaland stakeholders, including political leaders, communities and traditional leaders to build upon the 23 April agreement, implement the follow-up steps, and continue their constructive dialogue.

We also welcome the willingness expressed by the Jubaland stakeholders to engage the Federal Government of Somalia, and that Jubaland is ready for full collaboration with the Federal Government. International partners urge the Jubaland administration and the FGS leadership to peacefully resolve their continuing

differences through dialogue, and to de-escalate the ongoing tensions in Gedo region.

We stand ready to provide the necessary support to the FGS and all FMS leaders as they strive for reconciliation and cooperation to advance national interests. In this regard, partners also welcome other recent reconciliation initiatives, in particular in South West State and Galmudug, aimed at forming inclusive, unified state-level administrations.

We urge that these efforts continue throughout Somalia for the benefit of the people. We call on all Somalis to foster unity and reconciliation as they begin the Holy month of Ramadan while facing not only the unprecedented menace from COVID-19 but also the continuing threat from terrorism.

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COVID-19: ACCEA proposals agreed by DHSC and Welsh Government ministers

News story

An update following the suspension of the 2020 competition for new and renewed national Clinical Excellence Awards.



Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Welsh Government ministers have agreed the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards' (ACCEA) proposals following suspension of the 2020 round.

They have agreed that:

- applications for the 2020 national Clinical Excellence Awards

competition should remain suspended

- consultants and academic GPs unable to submit a renewal application in 2020 (whose awards are due to expire 1 April 2021) will not be disadvantaged – their awards will be extended by one year
- ACCEA should keep plans for new applications under review based on the ongoing impact of coronavirus (COVID-19)

ACCEA and DHSC and Welsh Government ministers have listened to advice from the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, Royal Colleges, employers and applicants in making these decisions.

ACCEA will further update award-holders and stakeholders on plans for the 2020 and 2021 national Clinical Excellence Awards competitions after the pandemic has subsided.

Consultants and academic GPs who were due to renew their awards in the 2020 competition should [log in to the online system](#) to ensure that we have your up-to-date email address.

We will contact you to explain how to extend your awards by one year.

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[Response to the ACMD recommendation: Epidyolex](#)

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

[New webinars to boost support for SMEs](#)

during coronavirus

Press release

The Department for International Trade to host a series of coronavirus webinars, free for SMEs across the UK



New support for SMEs during coronavirus has today been launched in the form of nearly 100 expert-led webinars

The webinars will offer practical advice to SMEs and focus on issues businesses trading internationally are facing.

Many webinars will be hosted by an International Trade Adviser and include question and answer sessions, while others will feature guest speakers from business and industry.

Topics covered will range from managing distribution of supply chains and the movement of goods, to support for selling online overseas.

Secretary of State for International Trade, Liz Truss said:

Maintaining trade is essential if the UK is to overcome the unprecedented economic challenge posed by Coronavirus.

In these uncertain times, SMEs doing business internationally need as much information as possible on how to adapt and continue to carry out their day-to-day business.

These sessions provide an essential service to help address the concerns we have heard from businesses across the country over the last few weeks.

My department is here to support all businesses trading internationally, using the UK's clout on the world stage to reduce barriers and lower tariffs to help small firms and through providing advice from our extensive teams across the UK and around the globe.

As of 1 May the department has hosted 15 webinars with more than 1,000 attendees. Speakers scheduled this month include International Trade Advisors and the Federation of Small Businesses.

Business can register via [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk) where all recorded webinars are hosted. DIT is also working with partners to take the usual schedule of events online.

There is also significant programme of webinars from other government departments, including HM Revenue and Customs and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, listed [here](#).

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[New Bounce Back Loans to launch today](#)

- small businesses will be able to apply for quick and easy-to-access loans from today
- businesses will be able to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000 with the cash arriving within days
- loans will be 100% government backed for lenders, and businesses can apply online through a short and simple form

Thousands of small firms and sole traders – including high street staples like hairdressers, coffee shops and florists – will be eligible for 100% government-backed Bounce Back Loans to help them make it through the coronavirus outbreak.

From 9am this morning, small business owners can apply to accredited lenders by filling out a simple online form, with only seven questions.

The government has also agreed with lenders that an affordable flat rate of 2.5% interest will be charged on these loans. And any business that has already taken out a Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan of £50,000 or less can apply to have these switched over to this generous new scheme.

The Bounce Back Loan scheme is the latest step in a package of world-leading support measures launched by Chancellor Rishi Sunak – with £7.5 billion already awarded in business grants, 4 million jobs supported through the job retention scheme and generous tax deferrals supporting hundreds of thousands of firms. To apply, see further information about the [Bounce Back Loan scheme](#).

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

Small businesses will play a key role creating jobs and securing

economic growth as we recover from the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Bounce Back loan scheme will make sure they get the finance they need – helping them bounce back and protect jobs.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We are backing small businesses, which are the backbone of our communities, with the support they need to stay afloat.

This new scheme of 100% government-guaranteed loans gives owners of even the smallest businesses the confidence and flexibility to borrow a sum which works for them. This will help ensure they can continue to trade, and be a key part of our efforts to reboot the British economy.

As part of the scheme, small businesses can borrow between £2,000 and £50,000. The government will provide lenders with a 100% guarantee and cover the cost of any fees and interest for the borrower for the first 12 months. No repayments will be due during this period to enable firms to get back on their feet.

The loans are available through a network of lenders, including the five largest banks.

Further Information

- Eligible companies will be subject to standard customer fraud, anti-money laundering (AML) and Know Your Customer (KYC) checks prior to any loan being made. Some State Aid restrictions may apply to applications.
- The borrower always remains 100% liable for the debt.

Government support for business of all sizes:

Firm Size	Turnover < £45m	Turnover > £45m	Investment grade
Bounce Back Loans (up to £50,000)	X	X	X
Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)	X		
Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)		X	X
Covid Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF)			X
Job Retention Scheme	X	X	X
Business Grants (dependent on rateable value of the property)	X	X	X
VAT deferrals	X	X	X
Covering the cost of statutory sick pay	X	X	X
Future Fund (only if VC funded)	X	X	

Reactions from business groups:

Mike Cherry, National Chair of the Federation of Small Businesses, said:

“We know many small firms have struggled to secure small loans speedily. We are pleased that the Chancellor has listened, and swiftly developed this new scheme for small businesses to access finance quickly, interest-free for the first year and at an affordable fixed interest rate for the remainder.”

Tej Parekh, Chief Economist at the Institute of Directors (IOD) said:

“The government has kept an open ear to businesses, and continues to adapt its coronavirus response, which is very welcome. The business interruption loan scheme has started to reach firms, but small firms were still having difficulty accessing finance. This additional measure should help more of those firms get the cash they need to see them through the weeks and months ahead.”

Stephen Jones, CEO, UK Finance said:

The Bounce Back Loans Scheme will help smaller businesses and sole traders rapidly access the finance they need by filling in a simple form online with an accredited lender.

This builds upon the broad package of support that lenders are already offering to help SMEs through these tough times, including capital repayment holidays, extended overdrafts and billions of pounds worth of lending.

Accredited lenders approved to offer Bounce Back Loans have worked at pace with the Treasury to get this scheme up and running by Monday, and staff are now focused on processing applications and getting money to businesses as quickly as possible.

Rob Hattrell, Vice President of eBay UK said:

This is extremely welcome news for small businesses up and down the country who trade online and offline, including the 300,000 who trade on eBay on a daily basis. Many of Britain's SMBs are really struggling financially in the current crisis. Hopefully, this move from government will help our very smallest businesses get the financing they need quickly to manage their cash flow or replenish their stock.

While the existing CBIL scheme may be appropriate for some businesses, our smallest businesses told us that they were finding it hard in practice to access this support from banks. By extending the current government guarantee from 80% of each loan to 100%, we hope this will make it more likely that banks will extend finance at a critical time. And by making it simpler to apply, SMBs should

be able to get the help they need quickly just when they need it most.

Dr. Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) said:

“The launch of the Bounce Back Loan Scheme is an important milestone in getting credit flowing to small firms who have so far struggled to access the financial support they need. The standardisation of the interest rate that can be charged after the first 12 months is a welcome step in helping firms manage their ongoing costs. > “We look forward to working with the government, British Business Bank and UK financial institutions to ensure that the new scheme supplies cash to businesses on the ground quickly.”

Rain Newton-Smith, CBI Chief Economist, said:

The Chancellor is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with small businesses to help them through the crisis.

A 100% government guarantee on loans and a simple way of applying will be a lifeline to many small businesses and sole traders under pressure.

Banks have been operating at full throttle and must stay in overdrive to get more money out of the door faster. Time is of the essence.