

Trade Secretary launches UK-Ukraine Infrastructure Taskforce

News story

International Trade Secretary has today [11 July] launched the UK-Ukraine Infrastructure Taskforce alongside Ukrainian Minister for Infrastructure Oleksandr Kubrakov.



The first UK-Ukraine Infrastructure Taskforce meeting saw commitments made by the UK to deliver temporary housing and longer-term infrastructure projects to help the nation rebuild in the wake of Putin's illegal war.

Secretary of State for International Trade Anne-Marie Trevelyan and Ukrainian Minister for Infrastructure Oleksandr Kubrakov met in person, together with other representatives of Ukraine Government and UK businesses to discuss collaboration on the most pressing challenges for infrastructure reconstruction in Ukraine.

Building on the UK-Ukraine Infrastructure Summit in London last month, the meeting, which took place in the British Embassy in Warsaw, Poland, focussed on practical steps needed to support the post-conflict reconstruction of Ukraine.

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Ukrainian citizens are not only defending their country against Putin's illegal war – they are trying to rebuild it.

Restoring public services, unblocking disrupted supply chains and re-open life-saving evacuation routes all need urgent and concerted action. President Zelenskyy is right that these challenges must be shared by countries and businesses around the world.

I was pleased to confirm the UK's unflinching support to play our part in these efforts when I met Minister Kubrakov today.

I heard how families have emerged from bomb shelters to find their properties turned to rubble. So I want to make sure that UK companies can help by providing temporary bridges and modular, prefabricated housing to help – the same type of emergency housing the UK needed after World War Two.

Longer term, the UK will be providing expertise on the delivery of sustainable and resilient infrastructure through our brilliant UK-based businesses. And we'll be continuing to work closely with Ukraine to offer them any help needed elsewhere, be it on energy, water, sanitation or public utilities.

It's particularly poignant to have held the inaugural taskforce meeting in Poland.

Poland has been quite literally on the frontline of the efforts to support Ukraine against Putin. The government and its citizens have been extraordinarily generous in their support of Ukraine. It makes the UK even prouder than ever to call Poland a friend, and I'm pleased to have strengthened that friendship today.

The Taskforce meeting follows the UK-Ukraine Infrastructure Summit in London on 17 July, where 120 delegates from both nations discussed the scale of the challenge to rebuild Ukraine as a result of Putin's illegal war.

Longer term support discussed also included £3.5 billion of financial capacity available for UK exporters and Ukrainian buyers across sectors from UK Export Finance (UKEF).

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[Positive momentum towards peace and stability in Yemen](#)

Thank you, President. And, can I start by thanking the Special Envoy and the Assistant-Secretary-General from OCHA, for their briefings – and, to the UN, in general, for their continued efforts on securing long term and lasting peace in Yemen.

We welcome the positive impact on the lives of Yemeni people of the continued reduction of violence, resulting from the truce, and the progress on the confidence building measures.

Special Envoy, we welcome the multitrack process that you have outlined, and Ms Msuya's proposals for economic recovery. The truce and confidence building

measures are important first steps, but, as we've discussed before, securing sustainable peace will require ambition and progress on a wide range of issues, including on the economic and military tracks, as well as the unblocking of roads across Yemen.

We also welcome the news that the Military Coordination Committee intends to establish monthly meetings to address the key events of concern.

I'd like to highlight three concerns, in particular:

The first is that the UK remains concerned about the humanitarian, and wider social and economic impact, of the continued road closures around Taiz. Special Envoy, we echo your calls for all sides to coordinate to reach agreement as soon as possible to open the main roads, and reap the benefits of that.

Second, on de-mining, we welcome the reduction in reported civilian casualties since the truce began. But, as you said, Special Envoy, landmines and unexploded ordnance are claiming increasing numbers of civilian lives, including those of children.

Increasing humanitarian access would enable UNMHA to protect some of the most vulnerable Yemenis, so we continue to call on all parties to support de-mining efforts across Yemen.

Third, food insecurity. The global growth in commodity prices, which you both referred to, means increased food insecurity, hunger, famine in Yemen. And food prices have hit record highs. So, we echo Ms Msuya's call to all donors to ensure that funding is made immediately available for disbursement, at pace, to reduce the suffering.

Finally, the UK also remains concerned about the threat posed by the SAFER oil tanker and the shortfall in funding for the UN's emergency operation. Inaction will come at a high price.

The UK has pledged \$5 million towards the UN plan, and we urge others to commit funding to bridge the remaining \$20 million gap so the emergency operation can begin to address the risk of profound humanitarian and environmental damage.

In conclusion, President, we urge parties to continue to show the courageous leadership to build on positive momentum to ensure progress, and to prioritise the peace and stability of Yemen. As the Special Envoy said, this is the best opportunity for peace in years.

I thank you.

National Highways' bridge schemes shortlisted for South West engineering awards

The Institution of Civil Engineers has shortlisted the A38 Mowhay footbridge scheme Plymouth for the Sub £8 million category, while the 18-month refurbishment of the two M5 Junction 11 bridges has been nominated in the over £11 million category in its 2022 South West Civil Engineering Awards, as well as both being up for the People's Choice award,

Earlier this year National Highways and contractors South West Highways Ltd completed the £2.89 million project to upgrade the Mowhay footbridge, effectively joining up with a local cycle route around the city and also making it easier for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs to cross the A38.

The original bridge was not wide enough to safely accommodate both cyclists and walkers, and work started in June last year to modify both the bridge and ramps to enable it to link up with a recently completed footway/cycleway.

As well as the wider deck, the upgrade includes a more manageable gradient, new ramps, steps, fencing and guard rails, new lighting and a new surface water drainage system. By improving the connection between Honicknowle, Weston Mill and St Budeaux further recreational opportunities will be unlocked in Plymouth and commuters can now actively choose an alternative sustainable method of transport.

The refurbishment scheme of the M5 bridges supporting the junction 11 Golden Valley Gyratory was a major undertaking for National Highways and MJ Church and involved complex repairs and deep excavations to the two main supporting bridges between Gloucester and Cheltenham.

The scale of the excavation work during the M5 bridges refurbishment scheme

The work included the removal and reconstruction of a number of walls, concrete repairs to the bridge decks, replacement of bridge bearings, removal and reconstruction of parapet beams and safety fencing, and waterproofing and entire resurfacing of the gyratory carriageway and footpath.

And during the 18-month programme of work the gyratory was fully closed for safety reasons, although drivers were still able to join and leave the M5 via the slip roads.

Mark Fox, National Highways' Interim Regional Director, said:

We're very proud of our work here in the South West and it's

pleasing to be recognised by the Institute by being shortlisted in this year's awards.

The A38 Mowhay bridge widening scheme will enhance the lives of communities using this bridge over the A38. We're committed to improving safety across our road network, and the new and improved bridge will make it much easier and safer for a variety of users, including cyclists, travelling to and from the centre of Plymouth.

The M5 Junction 11 bridges scheme was a truly complex operation and despite Covid restrictions earlier in the project, and some challenging weather conditions over the last 18 months, the scheme has been managed fantastically start to finish by both ourselves and our supply chain who ensured we have finished on schedule.

The awards will take place in Bristol on 15 September and voting for the People's Choice award closes on 29 July. [Find out more information on the awards.](#)

For information on all National Highways' works in the South West people can [visit our website.](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

PM call with Prime Minister Jonas Støre: 11 July 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Støre.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Prime Minister Jonas Støre today, following the Norwegian leader's recent visit to Ukraine.

The pair discussed the latest situation in the country, and how both Norway and the UK could continue to support President Zelenskyy's Government through diplomatic and military means.

The Prime Minister thanked Prime Minister Støre for his continued support to Ukraine and its allies, including Norway's recent £840m commitment to the country, and the leaders agreed on the importance of the international community remaining steadfast in their commitment to Ukraine. Ukraine was unable to negotiate a peace deal while Russia was still attacking it, the Prime Minister said.

Discussing energy security, the leaders recognised the public concern at rising prices, and agreed on the need for continued progress to low carbon solutions to shore up supplies.

The leaders agreed to stay in close touch in the coming weeks.

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[Preferred candidate for new Pensions Ombudsman announced](#)

Press release

Dominic Harris is the preferred candidate for the role of Pensions Ombudsman and Pensions Protection Fund Ombudsman, the DWP has announced today, 11 July 2022.



The appointment is subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the Work and Pensions Select Committee, which will take place on Wednesday 13th July 2022.

Harris is currently a Partner in the Pensions Team at law firm CMS. He also serves as Chair of the Investment and Defined Contribution Committee of the Association of Pension Lawyers.

The Pensions Ombudsman Service is an independent organisation set up by law to investigate complaints about pension administration. It is a Tribunal non-departmental public body of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The role of Pensions Ombudsman is a public appointment made by the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions. The appointment process has been an open competition regulated by The Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments.

Additional information

- The Pension Ombudsman is a full-time role and the Ombudsman is entitled to an annual remuneration of £143,095, which is uprated annually.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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