

# Joint statement between the UK and Egypt following the Association Council – 5 July

The Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, the Right Honourable Liz Truss welcomed His Excellency Mr. Sameh Shoukry, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt to London on 5 July for the inaugural meeting of the UK-Egypt Association Council.

The inaugural Association Council created a new platform to further the ambition laid out in the UK-Egypt Association Agreement, signed in December 2020. Within this framework, the Ministers had fruitful discussions on the development of the strategic partnership between the United Kingdom and Egypt.

The Ministers welcomed a number of recent commercial successes between the UK and Egypt, including:

- The two-line Cairo Monorail project, which includes trains manufactured in Derby, and is supported by UK Export Finance (UKEF)
- The sale of two ex-Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) ships to the Egyptian Navy, including contracts for their refit and upgrade;
- The opening of a new 66MW solar farm by Globeleq, following an investment worth \$80m;
- The finalisation of a \$100m investment by British Investment International (BII) to acquire Alfa Medical Group;
- The launch of commercial operations at the Lekela wind farm, following an investment worth \$325m.

The Ministers discussed prospects for enhanced economic cooperation between the UK and Egypt. They agreed to working intensively to grow bilateral trade and investment, including through tackling any barriers to trade and sharing expertise. They also committed to work towards reviewing and improving market access in the agriculture, healthcare, energy, and financial sectors, through the newly established subcommittee on trade.

The UK and Egypt emphasised their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation and investment in healthcare and education, given both fields' direct impact on levelling-up, job creation, and enhancing the quality of public services.

The Ministers welcomed deeper technical collaboration that will support joint work to overcome market access barriers in priority sectors. Including:

- A new phase of collaboration between NHS's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and Egypt's Unified Procurement Authority (UPA), helping to institutionalise Health Technology Assessment (HTA) in

Egypt.

- A joint statement of intent signed between Egypt's Energy Regulatory Authority (EERA) and the British Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM,) to help in reforming Egypt's renewable energy regulations.

The Ministers welcomed strengthening cooperation in Africa and exploring trilateral cooperation opportunities with African countries in various fields, particularly infrastructure.

The UK welcomed Egypt's preparations to host COP27 in Sharm el Sheikh (November 2022) as it takes over the COP Presidency. The UK and Egypt reinforced cooperation to deliver ambitious outcomes at COP27 building on the Glasgow Climate Pact and previous COP decisions. Both countries noted the importance of supporting developing nations in effecting a just transition, including through the transition to sustainable energy and green hydrogen, as well as in adapting to the impacts of climate change, including through the sustainable & integrated management of natural resources, enhancing resilience and building technical and technological capacities in this regard. The UK commends Egypt's leadership and efforts on renewable energy generation and opportunities for British investors and firms within the energy sector.

The Ministers also discussed a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest, including on consular issues and human rights.

The Ministers looked forward to holding the meetings of the Association Council regularly to further enhance Egypt-UK cooperation in various fields and take stock of progress.

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## BepiColombo

### Overview

The BepiColombo spacecraft:

- was launched on 20 October 2018
- is currently in cruise phase towards its destination
- is due to arrive at Mercury in late 2025
- is a joint mission between Europe and Japan
- has key UK involvement

# Introduction

Almost as dense as the Earth but not much bigger than our Moon, Mercury is the second smallest planet in the Solar System; scientists believe Mercury's high density can be put down to the planet having a massive iron core.

The surface is pock-marked with enormous craters caused by meteorites smashing into the planet's surface in the early stages of the Solar System's evolution some four billion years ago.

BepiColombo will be only the third spacecraft to visit Mercury in the history of space exploration. The mission will increase our understanding of all aspects of the planet, from its composition, structure, atmosphere and magnetic environment.

Mercury's harsh environment makes it a particularly challenging mission. The spacecraft will have to endure intense sunlight and temperatures up to 350°C while gathering data.

BepiColombo is named after Giuseppe 'Bepi' Colombo (1920-1984), a scientist who studied Mercury's orbital motion in detail as well as orbits and interplanetary travel in general. Although the temperature on Mercury can go as high as 462°C, the side of the planet facing away from the Sun is always very cold. One of the key objectives for BepiColombo is to find out whether there is ice on the cold side of the planet.

The mission will build on the experience gained in using electric propulsion on the SMART-1 mission. BepiColombo's journey will also be helped by the gravity of the Moon, Earth and Venus during fly-bys to help it on its way to Mercury. It will take the BepiColombo spacecraft seven years to reach its destination.

## Technology

BepiColombo consists of four sections: a Mercury Transfer Module (MTM) – designed to get the spacecraft to the planet; two orbiters: the European Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO) and the Japanese Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MMO); and a sunshield and interface structure (MOSIF) to protect it during the cruise phase.

ESA is responsible for the larger MPO. Its 11 scientific instruments will study Mercury from a low-polar-orbit.

MIXS will measure fluorescent X-rays that come from the Sun and are reflected off the planet's surface. Fluorescent X-ray measurements can be used to identify chemical elements while measurements at infrared wavelengths can be used to determine mineral composition.

Japan developed the MMO. This has five science instruments on board designed to examine Mercury's magnetic field and magnetosphere – the magnetic 'bubble' surrounding a planet. Mercury intrigues scientists because it is hard to understand why such a small planet can have a magnetic field at all.

BepiColombo will make its way to Mercury with an ion engine. This employs solar panels to generate electricity which is used to produce charged particles from xenon gas. A beam of these charged particles, or ions, is then expelled from the spacecraft. The engine will be used to slow the spacecraft down so that it can eventually be captured by the gravity of Mercury.

## **UK involvement**

Key items of the spacecraft were built in the UK in partnership with several UK science teams. The UK's involvement in BepiColombo is funded by the UK Space Agency.

UK space scientists, led by the University of Leicester, developed one of the key instruments on board BepiColombo: MIXS (Mercury Imaging X-ray Spectrometer). MIXS will be used to help find out about what the planet's surface is made of. This will help to explain how the planet formed during the early history of the Solar System.

Airbus Defence and Space (Germany) was appointed as the prime contractor to build the European components. Airbus UK provided all the spacecraft structures as well as the electrical and chemical propulsion systems for the MTM, the chemical propulsion system for the MPO (which will be the first dual mode propulsion system designed and built in Europe) and the systems which will separate the spacecraft modules on arrival at Mercury.

QinetiQ (UK) was awarded the contract to supply the innovative electric propulsion system for BepiColombo. Electricity generated by solar panels will be used to produce charged particles from xenon gas. A beam of these charged particles, or ions, is then expelled from the spacecraft to propel it forward. Ion propulsion produces low levels of thrust very efficiently compared with conventional chemical rockets.

SEA Ltd (now Thales Alenia Space UK) was contracted to supply the Remote Interface Units (RIU's) for the MPO and the MTM. The RIU's are important equipment for both spacecraft as they acquire the critical sensor data and telemetry as well as driving the thrusters that control the spacecraft.

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## **UN Human Rights Council 50: UK statement on Ukraine and Crimea**

Thank you, Mr President.

Let us not beat around the bush. It's 131 days since President Putin unleashed his brutal aggression against the independent sovereign state of Ukraine. 131 days of Russian violations of the Charter, human rights, and international humanitarian law, of a scale and a ferocity that we thought we

would never see again on this continent.

Over 14 million displaced. At a conservative estimate, almost 5000 civilians killed. Tens of millions around the world facing hunger as a result of the Russian blockade and attacks on Ukraine's ports. The names of Bucha, Mariupol, Kremenchuk forever etched into our memories.

Let me thank you, High Commissioner, for the work of your monitoring mission, in seeking to bring the facts to light. The truth must be told. Accountability is essential.

For the people of Crimea this story of war began eight years ago. Since 2014 Russia has conducted a brutal and systematic campaign of human rights violations against them. And it is getting worse – persecution of Crimean Tatars is intensifying and last year saw a ten-fold rise in arbitrary detentions.

Mr President,

We will not rest until Russia ceases its illegal war, and withdraws its forces and military equipment from the entirety of Ukraine.

High Commissioner,

How best can we uphold the truth in the face of Russian systematic disinformation?

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## [New data agreement with the Republic of Korea to spark new era of digital trade](#)

- Milestone marks the UK's first data adequacy decision in principle since leaving the EU
- Agreement will unleash digital trade between the UK and Republic of Korea, already worth more than £1.3 billion

British businesses and consumers are set to benefit as the UK announces an 'in principle' deal to boost data sharing with the Republic of Korea.

The deal is the UK's first independent adequacy agreement with [a priority country](#) since leaving the European Union and sees the government seizing the benefits of having independent data laws.

The ability to share more data without restrictions reduces administrative and financial compliance burdens and makes it easier for more organisations and businesses to trade and operate in both countries. It opens up new

markets to digital trade – from startups to multinationals – and brings benefits such as lower prices to consumers.

Data-dependent trade between the UK and the Republic of Korea is already worth £1.33 billion. This agreement will empower British businesses to build on this and grow our economy.

The new [agreement](#) means UK-based organisations looking to sustain or grow their operations in the Republic of Korea, such as AstraZeneca and the bank Standard Chartered, and Korean-headquartered companies with operations in the UK, such as Samsung and LG Electronics, will be able to share data freely and maintain high protection standards. Organisations will no longer need contractual safeguards, such as International Data Transfer Agreements and Binding Corporate Rules in place.

The agreement will also boost research and innovation, making it easier for experts to collaborate on medical treatments and other vital research that could save lives in the UK.

Data Minister Julia Lopez who signed the landmark agreement today said:

Today marks a huge milestone for the UK, the Republic of Korea and the high standards of data protection we share.

Our new agreement will open up more digital trade to boost UK businesses and will enable more vital research that can improve the lives of people across the country

Republic of Korea Commissioner of the Personal Information Protection Commission Jong in Yoon said:

I am honoured to agree to this joint statement today. Strengthening cooperation between the UK and the Republic of Korea based on the shared recognition of high standards of protection can contribute to forming a healthier and more sustainable global data landscape

The deal in principle strengthens the UK's commitment to championing international data flows as set out in the [National Data Strategy](#).

The decision follows a year of detailed technical discussions between officials from the UK Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Republic of Korea, the PIPC and the Financial Services Commission.

The deal will promote the trustworthy use and sharing of data between the two countries and spark a wave of digital trade. It is a clear signal that British organisations and consumers can trust data standards in the Republic of Korea.

Data-driven trade generated nearly three quarters of the UK's total service

exports and generated an estimated £234 billion for the economy in 2019.

The Rt. Hon. John Whittingdale MP, Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to the Republic of Korea, said:

I am delighted that the first new data adequacy agreement to be reached in principle by the UK is with the Republic of Korea. This reflects the strong relationship which already exists between our two countries and our shared commitment to high standards of data protection. By enabling the free flow of data, I have no doubt that this will reduce barriers and help businesses to trade.

Caroline Louveaux, Chief Privacy Officer, Mastercard

This announcement by the UK and the Republic of Korea today is really important for a company like Mastercard. The ability to safely and securely exchange personal data, especially financial and credit information, is paramount to building trust. That trust is important for consumers to live their day to day lives and for small businesses to thrive

Daniel Camilleri, CEO and Co-Founder of Cyberselves said:

Secure and trusted transfers of personal data are critical to any organisation. As an SME seeking to export internationally, any changes that support friction free and cost reducing changes will support our ability to grow and expand.

This is a welcome announcement today between the UK and the Republic of Korea, which provides organisations like ours with greater certainty of the regulatory landscape.

**Ends**

**Notes to Editors:**

- The full statement from the UK and Republic of Korea on their [agreement to finalise data adequacy](#) can be found here [LINK].
- The Information Commissioner will be consulted in accordance with the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) that sets out its role in UK adequacy assessments.
- Last August, the UK [announced](#) the Republic of Korea as a priority country for data adequacy alongside the United States, Australia,

Singapore, the Dubai International Finance Centre and Colombia. The government continues to make excellent progress in its discussions with other priority countries

- Data enabled services to these destinations are already worth more than £80 billion. New partnerships will unlock more growth and allow us to share crucial information, such as life-saving research and cutting-edge technology innovation across our borders.

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## Russia's intensified attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine: UK statement to the OSCE

Thank you, Mr Chair. Just over 4 months since the start of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, we are deeply saddened to meet once again in the Special Permanent Council to mark yet further tragic developments in President Putin's brutal war of choice in Ukraine.

Russia's intense barrage of missile attacks continues to tear through towns across Ukraine. The cost for the civilians targeted has been devastating: yet more destruction, yet more injuries, yet more deaths.

The last few weeks have sadly been no exception, with increasing Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure. On the morning of 1 July, at least 21 people are reported to have died – including children – in air-launched missile strikes on 2 residential buildings and a recreation centre in the seaside resort of Serhiivka in Ukraine's Odesa region. On 27 June, the missile strike on the Kremenchuk shopping centre is reported to have killed as many as 25 people with more than 50 wounded. On 25 June, Kyiv was shelled overnight by Russia, targeting a residential district. We mourn with the families of those that have lost their lives in this barbaric war.

The perpetrators of these appalling acts must be held to account. The UK continues to strongly condemn the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian objects, as well as the indiscriminate or disproportionate use of any weapon. The deliberate targeting of civilians is not only abhorrent, but also a blatant violation of international law. The atrocities we see being committed day after day will not be forgotten. Those giving and those following illegal orders will be held to account.

Once again, we call on Russia to abide by the principles of proportionality and distinction; and to immediately cease the indiscriminate use of wide area impact weapons in civilian areas. And ultimately, we call once again on



Russia to stop this war and withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine.

Mr Chair, as we have already heard, yesterday the international community gathered in Lugano, Switzerland, at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in solidarity with Ukraine. [My Foreign Secretary stated that Ukraine's recovery from Russia's war of aggression will be a symbol of the power of democracy over autocracy](#). It will show President Putin that his attempts to destroy Ukraine have only produced a stronger, more prosperous and more united nation. We commend the extraordinary bravery and resolve of the men and women of Ukraine in the face of this brutal assault on its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The UK is resolute in its support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity; we will remain at Ukraine's side as it emerges as a strong and thriving democracy – however long it takes.