

PM meeting with Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and Finnish President Sauli Niinistö: 29 June 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and Finnish President Sauli Niinistö at the NATO Summit in Madrid today.



The Prime Minister reiterated his staunch support for Sweden and Finland's NATO membership aspirations. He described their accession as a great step forward for NATO and welcomed the progress made since his visits to Sweden and Finland last month.

The Prime Minister said that the membership of two more pro-peace democracies will permanently strengthen our defensive Alliance, helping to keep us all safe.

The Prime Minister updated on his recent visit to Kyiv. The leaders discussed the need to oppose Russian threats and intimidation in all its guises. That includes by ensuring that the people of Ukraine have the tools they need to turn the tide in Putin's futile war of aggression – they agreed that Putin is offering Ukraine no other option.

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Commission opens inquiry into The

Potantin Foundation as founder sanctioned

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into The Potantin Foundation, after the charity's founder Mr Vladimir Potantin was sanctioned by the UK government.



The Potantin Foundation was registered in 2006 and is a grant-making charity supporting its sister charity in Russia, the Vladimir Potantin Foundation. It has broad charitable objects which include advancing the education of the public in Russia and elsewhere.

Mr Potantin is the charity's only member and has controlling rights, including trustee appointment and removal.

On 29 June 2022 the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office sanctioned Mr Potantin under the UK's Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Mr Potantin is now subject to a full asset freeze and his name appears on the 'UK Sanctions List' as a designated person.

The Commission's position is that individuals subject to UK financial sanctions cannot control a charity.

The Commission opened an inquiry on 29 June 2022 to:

1. Consider the viability of the charity and how to safeguard its assets;
2. Examine the management and administration of the charity by its trustees including the role of Mr Potantin, as the charity's founder, if any, in decision-making;
3. Review the relationship between the charity and the Vladimir Potantin Foundation in Russia and the management of grants awarded and associated risks.

The regulator has issued orders restricting certain actions without its prior consent, including restricting the charity's bank account, preventing the charity's trustees from parting with the charity's assets, and restricting Mr

Potantin's ability to use his powers as the charity's founder.. According to [the charity's most recently filed accounts](#), it has assets in excess of £95million.

The Commission may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional issues emerge.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. On 29 June 2022, Mr Vladimir Potanin was named by Her Majesty's Treasury ('HMT') as a 'designated person' for the purposes of the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.
2. The effect of designation with an asset freeze by the UK government, means it is prohibited to deal with the frozen funds or economic resources, belonging to or owned, held or controlled by a designated person. It is also prohibited to make funds or economic resources available, directly or indirectly, to, or for the benefit of, a designated person. Matters relating to sanctions should be directed at the [Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation](#).
3. Prior to the opening of the inquiry and following Mr Potanin's designation by the Canadian and Australian governments, the charity's Chair of trustees contacted the Commission to discuss the implications of this on the charity. At the Commission's encouragement the Charity's trustees submitted a serious incident report to the Commission and has continued to provide further information as requested.
4. The charity's most recently filed accounts can be found on [the register](#).
5. It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries are available on GOV.UK](#).
6. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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[Gender recognition application modernised](#)

News story

Minister of State for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch, has today (29th June) launched a new service which modernises the process of applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate.



The Government committed to modernising the application process in response to the public consultation on the Gender Recognition Act, where respondents highlighted how burdensome and unaffordable the existing procedure was.

Last year, Minister for Women and Equalities, Liz Truss, announced the first step of this process by reducing the fee for applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) to £5, a move that has helped an increased number of people apply.

Today's announcement will see all aspects of the GRC application moved onto one [GOV.uk portal](https://www.gov.uk), removing the administrative burden on individuals and centralising the process.

Minister of State for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch, said:

"We want transgender people to be free to live and to prosper in modern Britain.

"Those that responded to the Gender Recognition Act consultation asked for a simplified and centralised process, which is why I am delighted to launch this improved service today.

"This government will continue to prioritise initiatives that can improve the lives of LGBT people across the country."

The new online service has been carefully developed and rigorously tested with trans people to ensure that it meets the needs of applicants and removes the barriers highlighted in the consultation. With this in mind, the guidance has been simplified and the process made more transparent and less bureaucratic.

Applicants without online access will still be able to apply through a paper-based route, in line with Government Digital Service standards.

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UK steel safeguard: International Trade Secretary's statement, 29 June 2022

With permission, Mr Speaker I would like to make a statement on the Government's final decision regarding the UK's steel safeguard.

A strategic steel industry is of the utmost importance to the UK – especially given the uncertain geopolitical and economic waters that we are currently all charting.

Trade remedies are one of the ways that Government can protect their businesses. They tackle issues of dumping, of unfair government subsidies or, as in the case of safeguards, give businesses time to adjust to unforeseen increases in imports.

When we left the EU, Mr Speaker, the UK rolled-over the relevant trade remedies that were already in place. This included safeguards on 19 different categories of steel imported into the UK from the rest of the world.

Last year, the Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) reviewed these measures and recommended keeping the safeguard on ten categories of steel and removing it on nine. On 30 June 2021, the Government announced that it would extend the safeguard as recommended by the TRA on ten product categories of steel for three years and remove them on four of the remaining nine, but would extend the safeguard for one year on five categories of steel to allow further time to review them.

In March this year we passed legislation to allow the Government to take responsibility for the conduct of transition reviews and the reconsiderations of any transition review.

In March, Mr Speaker, I called-in the reconsideration of the steel safeguards with this new authority. The TRA has since completed additional analysis for my consideration. I have now considered their Report of Findings and concluded that there would be serious injury or the threat of serious injury to UK steel producers if the safeguard on the five additional categories of steel were to be removed at this time.

Given the broader national interest significance of this strategic UK industry, and the global disruptions to the energy markets and supply chains that the UK currently faces, we have concluded it is in the economic interest of the UK to maintain these safeguards, to reduce the risk of material harm if they were not maintained.

I am therefore extending the measure on the five steel categories for a

further two years, until 30 June 2024, alongside the other ten categories. This means the safeguard will remain in place on all 15 categories, updated from 1 July to reflect recent trade flows.

The Government wishes to make it clear to Parliament that the decision to extend the safeguard on the five product categories departs from our international legal obligations under the relevant WTO agreement, as relates to the five product categories. However, from time to time, issues may arise where the national interest requires action to be taken which may be in tension with normal rules or procedures.

The Government has therefore actively engaged with interested parties, including those outside the UK on the future of the UK's safeguard and has listened to the concerns raised. This also includes the needs of the many thousands of people employed throughout our downstream steel industry who play a vital role in the economic life of the UK.

Throughout this investigation, downstream users of steel have raised concerns about difficulties in sourcing some steel products in the UK, in particular, those classified under category 12. I have listened to these concerns, and I am acting to protect this vital part of the economy by increasing the tariff rate quota on Category 12a to ensure it better reflects trade flows.

Finally, the Government has also decided to suspend the safeguard measure for steel goods coming from Ukraine for the next two years. The Government is clear that it will do everything in its power to support Ukraine's brave fight against Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion and to ensure long-term security and prosperity and the maintenance of the world order from which we all benefit. The Government has already removed all tariffs under the UK-Ukraine FTA to zero to support Ukraine's economy. This decision means Ukrainian steel will not be subject to the additional safeguard quotas and duty.

Mr Speaker, these are unusual times – the aftershocks of the gravest pandemic have combined with the biggest war in Europe since 1945. The spike in energy costs is creating huge stresses on manufacturing. Global steel markets are facing persistent overcapacity. The TRA findings provide clear evidence of serious injury or the threat of serious injury to our UK producers. The Government has a duty to use its democratic mandate to the greatest possible effect to protect the interests of the British people and provide leadership in these challenging times.

On balance, we have therefore decided that it is in the vital public interest that Government acts to protect the steel sector, which is why we have taken the steps that we have. We believe that this approach is in the public interest, and this decision has been taken collectively and with reference to the Ministerial Code, noting the conflict outlined above.

Mr Speaker, this has been a finely balanced decision.

Steel is a vital industry for the UK and it is in constant use in our everyday lives.

But the global position on steel production is challenging. The use of unfair subsidies contributes to global overcapacity, putting domestic industries at risk around the world.

The measures I am announcing today will further support our steel industry and those who work in it. This comes on the back of this government securing an expansive removal of Section 232 tariffs on imports of UK steel and aluminium products into the USA, which came into effect earlier this month. The tariff-free volumes we have secured mean that UK steel and aluminium exports to the US can return to levels not seen since before 2018.

It is important to remember that safeguards are a temporary, short-term measure. We will continue to work with international partners alongside other government departments to support our domestic steel sector for the long-term.

Mr Speaker – I hope that the House will support this Government's stance in defending our strategically important steel sector, and I commend this statement to the House.

Two Great War RAF officers' graves rededicated

The graves of Second Lieutenant (2nd Lt) Alan Thompson Watt Boswell RAF and Second Lieutenant (2nd Lt) Robert Percy Gundill RAF who were killed on 2 October 1918, have been rededicated more than a hundred years after they died.

The service which was organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (MOD JCCC), also known as the 'MOD War Detectives' was held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) Duhalloy Advanced Dressing Station (ADS) Cemetery, near Ypres Belgium on Wednesday 29 June.

Tracey Bowers JCCC said:

"These two brave young men served throughout the Great War firstly with the Army before transferring to the Royal Flying Corp showing courage and devotion, it is a privilege to be here today to see their names on their headstones and pay our respects to them."

The rededication service for 2nd Lt Boswell was attended by members of his family including his great nephew Russell Evans who read the poem "High Flight" at the ceremony.

Russell Evans, said:

"There were nine wonderful wreaths laid by various branches of the military and CWGC on the headstones of Alan Boswell and Robert Gundill, his fellow airman who both died in an aircrash in October 1918."

2nd Lt Boswell, aged 28, came from Woolwich and was a very talented athlete and represented Wales in hockey and football, and his County at cricket and rugby. Alan was employed as a School Master when he enlisted into the Welsh Regiment in December 1914. Alan was quickly promoted to the rank of Serjeant and was discharged from the Army on being granted a commission into The Royal Flying Corps in September 1917.

2nd Lt Boswell served with 105 and 109 Squadron before joining 108 Squadron in July 1918 as a Pilot. He had a total of 81 flying hours by October 1918.

2nd Lt Gundill, aged 21, came from Pontefract and was a liquorice manufacturer before he enlisted into the West Yorkshire Regiment on Dec 1914, a month before his 18th birthday. Pte Gundill served overseas, including Egypt and France, he was wounded in June 1916 when hit by shrapnel in his back. 2nd Lt Gundill was granted a commission into The Northumberland Fusiliers on 25 April 1917.

2nd Lt Gundill applied to transfer to the Royal Flying Corps where he was appointed as an Observer on 6 July 1918 and posted to 108 Squadron.

The ceremony conducted by Reverend (Squadron Leader) Adrian Klos and supported by members of XI(F) Squadron RAF Coningsby was held with family members present, alongside one of the researchers who submitted the case.

Newly engraved headstones for 2 Lieutenants Boswell and Gundill. Crown copyright.

The Reverend Klos said:

"Today, we have been rededicating the graves of two of our service personnel, 2nd Lt Boswell and 2nd Lt Gundill, and to have Boswell's family with us today was very moving. To hear the emotion in the great nephew as he read the words of High Flight and recognising the sacrifice of his family member made.

"It was a real privilege to be here as RAF and members of the MOD, and recognising the family price these young men paid, we will honour that together."

How they died

2nd Lt's Boswell and Gundill were flying as a tandem crew on DH9 D1080 as part of a bombing raid in the locale of Menin when they went missing on 2 October 1918. The Officer Commanding the 108 Squadron stated they left the aerodrome at 1207 hours and were last seen flying at 3,000 feet west of the objective, but they failed to return.

Geert Bekaert, Area Director for Central and Southern Europe at the CWGC,

said:

“These brave men died in the final months of the First World War. The support they gave from the air to the infantry troops when the Allies were advancing through Belgium was critically important. It is an honour to commemorate them and we will care for their graves in perpetuity.”