

PM meeting with Argentinian President Fernández: 27 June 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met Argentinian President Fernández at the G7 Summit in Germany today.



The Prime Minister met Argentinian President Fernández at the G7 Summit in Germany today.

The leaders discussed the conflict in Ukraine. The Prime Minister stressed the importance of the international community upholding Ukraine's sovereignty by backing President Zelenskyy's appeal for international support. The Ukrainians would not stop fighting whatever we said. They were seeing their loved ones killed and were fighting for their lives.

The Prime Minister and President Fernández agreed to work together on a number of issues of interest to both the UK and Argentina, including sustainable energy and helping to get grain out of Ukraine.

President Fernández raised the Falkland Islands. The Prime Minister was firm that their sovereignty is not in question. The Prime Minister stressed that the Falkland Islanders, like all people, have a right to self-determination.

Both leaders agreed on the enduring value of the friendship between the British and Argentinian people and that finding ways to strengthen the relationship between our countries would benefit both the UK and Argentina.

Published 27 June 2022

UK Government extends appointment of Special Envoy to the US on Northern Ireland

Press release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis CBE MP, has today announced the extension of Trevor Ringland's appointment as Special Envoy to the United States on Northern Ireland. Mr Ringland's appointment has been extended to 31 October 2022.



The appointment of the Special Envoy to the United States on Northern Ireland was [announced in June 2021](#). Due to the global pandemic, Mr Ringland's work in the US was unable to formally commence until October 2021.

The Secretary of State has therefore decided to extend the position for a short period, until the end of October 2022.

Mr Ringland will continue to be responsible for promoting Northern Ireland interests across the US, supporting the Government's vision for Northern Ireland as an excellent place to live, work and do business.

Published 27 June 2022

Telecoms industry agrees to new cost-of-living plan following government

summit led by Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries

- Customers who can no longer afford their bills will be offered help to stay connected
- Digital Secretary urges anyone struggling to speak to their provider following No 10 summit co-chaired by cost-of-living tsar David Buttress

The UK's biggest broadband and mobile operators have agreed to a raft of new commitments to further help customers with the rising cost of living following a government-led summit at No 10 Downing Street.

These include measures such as allowing customers struggling with bills to move to cheaper packages without charge or penalty, or agreeing manageable payment plans, and options to improve existing low cost offers and increasing promotion of existing deals.

The measures, put forward by the government in consultation with the industry, will ensure people struggling with bills due to the economic aftermath of the pandemic and war in Ukraine can continue to make calls, send texts and get online.

Bosses representing the vast majority of the UK telecoms market – including BT Group, Openreach, Virgin Media O2, Vodafone, Three, TalkTalk and Sky – signed up to the pledges at an event chaired by Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries and Cost of Living Business Tsar David Buttress today.

The commitments, which take effect immediately, are:

- All providers commit to supporting their customers who may be struggling with the cost-of-living and to treat them with compassion, understanding and as individuals.
- All providers commit to supporting customers struggling with their bills and to offer ways to keep them connected, such as allowing them to move to cheaper packages without charge or penalty, or agreeing manageable payment plans.
- All operators commit to continue to protect the connectivity of their customers known to be vulnerable as a priority.
- Providers – supported by Government – commit to take steps to raise awareness of low cost products to those claiming Universal Credit.
- Mobile providers commit to considering more ways to help their customers, including exploring tariffs, options to improve existing low

cost offers, and increasing promotion of existing deals.

The government has already taken action to help those on benefits access cheaper deals by negotiating social tariffs for those on Universal Credit which are now available across 99 per cent of the UK, but this latest intervention means anyone struggling to pay their broadband or mobile bill as a result of global price rises can expect support from their provider if they ask for it.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

Families across the country face increased anxiety about keeping up with bills, so today I agreed with broadband and mobile industry bosses what more can be done to support people during this difficult time.

I'm pleased to report the industry is listening and has signed up to new commitments offering customers struggling with the cost of living help to stay connected. Those who need support should contact their supplier to see what is available.

Commenting on the meeting, Chief Executive at Mobile UK, Hamish MacLeod, said:

Mobile operators welcome the commitments agreed upon today with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, which build on offers already in place to help the most vulnerable. We welcomed the chance to discuss with the Government not only how to raise awareness of such schemes but also to set out the further steps being taken to support those struggling with their bills.

Andrew Glover, Chair of the Internet Service Providers' Association, said:

The telecoms sector knows that people are facing real challenges with the cost-of-living crisis. Our members are determined to do what they can to help their customers through this period and, together with government, we will work to raise greater awareness of the support available.

These commitments, along with the social tariffs that are available from many members, will hopefully help people in need at this challenging time. We encourage customers who are struggling with their bills to reach out to their broadband provider to get help.

The Digital Secretary has been calling on all providers yet to offer social tariffs – discounted broadband and mobile deals for people on Universal Credit and other benefits – to step up and support their customers. She has

called on broadband providers that do offer social tariffs to do more to raise awareness of them, after Ofcom data showed less than two per cent of eligible people are taking up these discounted offers.

In a letter sent in April to the bosses of BT Group, Virgin Media O2, Hyperoptic, KCom, G.Network and Community Fibre, she asked for an outline of their plans to promote social tariffs and for estimates of take-up over the coming twelve months. These companies all offer social tariff products to low-income households, with some providers offering deals from as low as £10 per month. Vodafone – via its Voxi brand – recently launched the first mobile social tariff.

Social tariff offers are available to eligible people in 99 per cent of the country and could represent a saving of more than 50 per cent (around £180 per year) against the average cost of broadband.

Landline and broadband social tariffs have been offered by BT, Virgin Media O2 and KCom for several years, but since 2021 there has been a threefold rise in companies voluntarily offering their own social tariffs – with Sky, Now Broadband, County Broadband and others coming forward – after the government stepped in to negotiate the low-cost deals.

Meeting attendees:

- Nadine Dorries, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and sport
- David Buttress, Cost of Living Business Tsar
- Sabine Chalmers, BT Group – Director of Regulatory Affairs and Company Secretary
- Marc Allera, Chief Executive, BT Consumer
- Jeff Dodds, Virgin Media O2 – Chief Operating Officer
- Stephen Van Rooyen, Sky – Chief Executive Officer
- Tristia Harrison, TalkTalk – Chief Executive Officer
- Dana Tobak, Hyperoptic – Chief Executive Officer
- Graeme Oxby, CommunityFibre – Chief Executive
- David Sangster, G.Network – Chief Executive Officer

- Clive Selley, Openreach – Chief Executive Officer
- Ahmed Essam, Vodafone UK, Chief Executive
- Tony Keeling, Shell Energy – Chief Executive Officer
- Greg Mesch, CityFibre – Chief Executive Officer
- Gareth Williams, Gigaclear – Chief Executive Officer
- Malcolm Corbett, Independent Networks Cooperative Association (INCA) – Chief Executive Officer
- Tim Shaw, Kcom – Chief Executive
- Andrew Glovers, Internet Service Providers Association, Chair
- Lindsey Fussell, Ofcom – Group Director
- Elaine Carey, Three – Chief Commercial Officer
- Hamish MacLeod, Mobile UK – Chief Executive

Opening Speech: World Drugs Day event at Accra

Dear Honourable Ministers, Ambassadors, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to thank the Government of Ghana and the Narcotics Control Commission for inviting me to give a speech today, as Charge d’Affairs for the British High Commission. This is an important day to reflect on this global challenge, which affects us all.

The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World Drug Day, is marked on 26 June every year, to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving the goal of a world free of drug abuse.

Each year, individuals, communities, and organisations all over the world join in this global observance, to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent for societies around the world. The theme this year – addressing drug challenges in health and humanitarian crises – really resonates with the UK.

In December last year, we published From Harm to Hope – the UK's new drugs strategy.

This is a long term, 10-year plan designed to cut crime and save lives. It recognises explicitly that the challenge around drugs is more than the criminal elements – it is about healthcare and society as well. As our strategy sets out, there is a massive financial cost from drugs. In the UK the financial cost is estimated at least £20 billion a year. But there is also a human cost – of lives ruined, or lost. For example:

- there are 300,000 crack cocaine or heroin addicts committing crimes to feed their habit across the UK
- in England and Wales 3,000 people lost their lives through drug misuse last year

We recognise in our new strategy that we must increase efforts to tackle drug addiction as well as drug crime.

This is complex, and it will mean getting public services to work better together, to provide more support to people battling their addictions – recognising that these are chronic and long term, so that they do not affect employment, or housing, or mental health because, then the cost to the state increases exponentially.

So the UK's strategy will not only continue to disincentivise drug use – through awareness and stronger enforcement – but also to undermine the markets in the UK, Europe and the US that are driving this crime. We will also significantly increase funding for health workers, treatments and interventions – with an ambition for 50,000 more treatment places to be available in the coming years.

Thankfully, Ghana does not suffer as many of the debilitating issues stemming from class A drug addiction. We hope this continues, though there are signs across West Africa that domestic markets may start to expand. So far though, it is around the supply of drugs where the UK and Ghana have worked together so closely over the last few years.

The global availability of drugs is higher than ever before, and it is not enough to work only at the source and destination points. We need to continue to disrupt every point of the supply chain. And that's where we need your help and support.

Ghana is noted as a transit country for drug trafficking particularly cocaine – with South America directly across the ocean – but also heroin and some psychotropic substances as well as precursor chemicals.

The UK has invested over £3 million in Narcotics Control Commission (NCC)

over the last 10 years. And our teams from Border Force, Immigration Enforcement and the National Crime Agency have developed strong partnerships not only with the NCC, but also EOCO, Ghana Police, FIC and other law enforcement agencies. We have made great progress together.

As many of you will already be aware, the UK has also now partnered with Germany (through GIZ) to set up a new Serious Organised Crime programme. This will build upon progress already made and continue to support and strengthen some of the institutions here in Ghana.

I am delighted to say, on this World Drugs Day, that the new programme will be collaborating with NCC on a new awareness raising campaign. This programme is designed to protect fishermen and their communities from the dangers of substance abuse and ensure they are aware of the dangers of becoming involved in trafficking.

Why fishing communities?

Because we understand that, globally, people are at risk of turning to the drugs trade as an economic buffer against poverty. And in the context of mounting competition over declining fish stocks, this risk rises.

In February, we saw 9 Ghanaian fishermen arrested in Nigeria for smuggling Indian hemp. We are realists. We know that where there are profits, crimes will continue to be committed. But we need to ensure that those who commit these are fully aware of the significance of their crimes, and the risks in doing so. And this means supporting vulnerable communities – like the fishing communities along the coast of Ghana in Osu, Labone, Pram Pram and Ada.

We hope that the campaign will reach a minimum of 500 individuals. And for each one of these individuals, to become an agent for change, within their families and communities.

Much as we are trying to do in the UK, we hope that this will help act as a disincentive to stop people from committing some of these crimes. And so I'm pleased that the UK and GIZ, through our new partnership, can support NCC in this really important awareness raising campaign.

So, once again, thank you for inviting me to attend today, thank you for your support on World Drugs Day, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to tackle this crucial issue.

ENDS

PM meeting with President Ramaphosa:

27 June 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met South African President Ramaphosa at the G7 Summit in Germany today.



The Prime Minister met South African President Ramaphosa at the G7 Summit in Germany today.

He began by updating the President on last week's successful Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The leaders agreed on the imperative for the world's richest economies to support developing countries to build clean and green infrastructure. The Prime Minister commended the work being done through the South Africa Just Energy Transition Partnership and confirmed the UK will contribute up to \$1.8bn towards it. The JETP which will accelerate South Africa's transition to a green economy.

The Prime Minister and President Ramaphosa agreed that South Africa has enormous potential to follow in the UK's footsteps and phase out the use of coal, and all the raw materials it needs to achieve green and sustainable growth.

The Prime Minister and President Ramaphosa discussed the ongoing atrocities being committed in Ukraine. The Prime Minister underlined the far reaching consequences of Putin's aggression, in particular its impact on global food and energy prices – an impact the developing world is bearing the brunt of. The leaders agreed on the urgent need for Putin to open up a safe passage for grain to leave Ukraine and reaffirmed their support for the UN efforts on this.

The Prime Minister stressed that Putin must fail in Ukraine to prevent the creeping normalisation of his flagrant disregard for sovereignty and human rights.

Published 27 June 2022