

Ensuring long term stability in the Central African Republic

Thank you, President.

The United Kingdom welcomes the renewal of MINUSCA's mandate and thanks France for its efforts as penholder to reconcile differing views of Council members.

Delegations made difficult compromises.

The United Kingdom is disappointed by the loss of agreed Responsibility to Protect language. But we maintain that the Government of the Central African Republic remains primarily responsible for the protection of all civilians from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and that this issue will remain a key factor in future conversations.

This mandate renewal takes place in a difficult political and security context, and MINUSCA itself is facing significant challenges. But the Mission retains a key role in helping to build long-term peace in the Central African Republic. And while we recognise the views expressed by our A3 partners and welcome recent overall reductions in violations of the Status of Forces Agreement, we remain deeply concerned by night flight restrictions imposed by the government.

Such restrictions limit MINUSCA's ability to implement its mandate and jeopardise the safety and security of peacekeepers and of civilians. We support new language in the mandate to address this critical issue. And we call on the authorities to ensure MINUSCA's freedom of movement, with unhindered and immediate access throughout the territory of the Central African Republic, including by air and at night, as set out in the Mission's Status of Forces Agreement.

President, with this mandate MINUSCA can continue to provide effective support to long-term stability in the country. It is now up to the government to deliver on their stated commitments: to protect civilians and human rights; to take definitive steps on the peace agreement; and to uphold MINUSCA's freedom of movement.

Thank you.

UK Government partnership with

Montserrat bolstered by additional funding support

Press release

The Governments of Montserrat and the United Kingdom have agreed to an increase in support for Montserrat during this financial year.



Montserrat

A new agreement between the Governments of Montserrat and the United Kingdom comprises a protection against exchange rate fluctuations for the UK's contribution to Montserrat's annual recurrent budget, and new capital investments for essential equipment.

Recurrent Budget support

- The recent fluctuations in exchange rate and continued pressure on the cost of living has meant a reduction in real terms to the cash value of the UK's support for Montserrat's recurrent budget.
- In recognition of this, the UK Government has agreed to an uplift of up to £4.72m to ensure that Montserrat is protected for the rest of this financial year from currency exchange impacts; to enable continued delivery of public services for the people of Montserrat.
- This will enable the delivery of essential services which otherwise would have been at risk.
- However, there is still a need to prioritise spending in what are challenging economic times.

Governor Sarah Tucker expressed her thanks to the FCD0 and UK Government for offering this much needed additional support to Montserrat during these exceptional times.

Referring to the budget support, Honourable Premier, Joseph Farrell said:

On behalf of the government and people of Montserrat I wish to express my sincere thanks to the FCD0 and the United Kingdom Government for providing the additional funds towards our 2022/23 financial aid package, these monies will allow the government to continue providing essential services to the people on island.

Capital support

- The UK Government has agreed to provide an additional £3 million of funding for essential equipment.
- Specifically, this money will provide a foam fire engine for the airport, a new two megawatt generator to provide greater resilience to the Montserrat Utilities Limited's (MUL) energy provision across Montserrat, and additional health service support including a CT scanner, 3D mammography unit, oxygen generator, emergency room and incubator equipment, and a medical incinerator. Procurement work will be completed by the end of this financial year.

Her Excellency the Governor, Sarah Tucker, said:

This new additional support will enable a more resilient power source, whilst we continue to develop greener energy alternatives, ensure our fire officers have the equipment they need to keep us safe, and, very importantly, bring forward the ability to offer CT scans and mammography here in Montserrat, enabling faster diagnosis and therefore faster more effective care.

Deputy Director of the Overseas Territories Directorate, Adam Pile, said:

This additional funding demonstrates the UK Government's continued commitment to Montserrat, I am delighted that additional support has been provided for capital equipment and that we are able to protect Montserrat from the exchange rate volatility this year. Credit is due to the Financial Secretary and her team for all of their continued hard work and support.

Note to Editors

The FCDO Financial Aid Mission team is due to arrive on Island on 30th November to discuss the budget for the new financial year.

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The contribution of United Nations Police to the Action for Peacekeeping Plus Priorities

Thank you President. My thanks here to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, and to all our briefers for the presentations today. And let me take the opportunity to thank all our UN Police forces for their essential work in sometimes really tough conditions.

I am pleased today's discussion is focusing on A4P and A4P+. UN Police have an important role to play in delivering whole-of-mission approaches to these reform priorities. So I will focus on the areas covered by the two Police Commissioners – protection of civilians and performance.

First, I thank Commissioner Fossen for her invaluable insight into implementing a protection of civilians mandate in UNMISS. We can sometimes forget when talking about Protection of Civilians how important unarmed approaches are. Of course, it is only part of the picture, and both armed and unarmed activity complement each other. We must consider the full range of tools to prevent and respond to civilian threats.

Peacekeepers need not only to protect civilians from physical violence, but provide a protective environment, and the space for mediation and dialogue. UNPOL are uniquely placed for this task. They are often the first and the last to meet with the local population during any intervention or response to a crisis. They need to establish strong relationships with those populations founded on trust.

Secondly, President, on performance. I thank Commissioner Berethe for speaking to this point in the MONUSCO context. Operating in any mission environment has its challenges, but MONUSCO is arguably one of the most challenging, as demonstrated by increased violence directed toward the Mission in recent months.

The UK welcomes the ongoing implementation of the Integrated Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework and of CPAS to monitor and evaluate performance and review progress against mandate implementation. Better

performance means better missions.

For UNPOL to operate and perform at its best, it needs to deliver the full range of policing roles it is mandated to fill. This should include capacity-building and development efforts of host-State police and justice and corrections institutions.

In line with the findings of the 2016 External Review of UNPOL, there could be more focus on institution building and specialist capabilities, not simply the number of personnel deployed. It is these skills that support sustainable peace and restoration of the Rule of Law.

Finally Mr President, our briefers and many speakers today have underlined the importance of the contribution UNPOL makes to the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. The UK strongly supports this, and welcomes the progress made to date.

We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen UNPOL to deliver on its full potential. I Thank you.

Update on Star Pubs & Bars' compliance with PCA investigation recommendations

The Pubs Code allows a brewing pub company to protect its route to market when a tenant chooses to go free of tie by including a stocking requirement in its Market Rent Only (MRO) tenancies. This means a tenant who takes the MRO option may still be required to stock some of the pub company's products. But the stocking requirement must be reasonable, and the tenant must be able to buy those products from any supplier.

In June 2019, the PCA launched an investigation into the use of the stocking requirement by Star Pubs & Bars (Star), which is part of the Heineken group. The PCA found that Star had failed to comply with the Pubs Code by using unreasonable stocking terms in certain proposed MRO tenancies. The findings were published in October 2020 and can be read in full [here](#).

In addition to a financial penalty, the PCA made eight recommendations to Star outlined on page 31 to 33 of the report. These were designed to ensure Star's proposed stocking requirements comply with the Pubs Code and address harm to tenants from any non-compliant stocking terms proposed since the Code came into force in 2016.

Star's Action Plan for complying with the PCA's recommendations was updated in August 2022 and can be read [here](#). Most actions are now reported as closed. The Action Plan shows the steps Star has taken to ensure it can demonstrate evidence-based compliance with the Code. Such compliance is to be supported

by effective operational systems and independent assurance within Star, such as through introducing monthly 'Compliance Cabinets' in Star's management system.

In summary, recommendation 3 required Star to review its MRO offers that were subject to negotiation or arbitration to identify any non-compliant stocking requirements and make new compliant offers to tenants. 76 tenants were affected and 32 have now concluded their MRO tenancy or are in the process of doing so. Other tenants have chosen to stay tied.

Recommendation 8 required a similar review of MRO tenancies already in the market, and for Star to offer to amend any non-compliant stocking requirements at no cost to the tenant. 17 tenants were affected and 14 have now concluded changes to their MRO tenancy or are in the process of doing so.

In all affected MRO cases, Star reduced the amount of Heineken UK product the pub must stock. The keg stocking requirement was either equivalent to or a reduction for the tenant on the previous requirement based on a percentage of taps that must stock Heineken UK products. In most cases, the cask and packaged brand stocking requirements were removed. It was also clarified in tenant agreements that stocking obligations fall away if Star sells the pub

Further information about Star's compliance with recommendations 3 and 8, and examples of the improved terms, can be read [here](#).

The PCA continues to monitor Star's compliance with recommendations 3 and 8 while agreements are concluded. Star has informed the PCA that where the tenant has not responded to contact, it is taking steps to treat the matter as closed. In the small number of cases where this applies, the PCA is monitoring Star's handling to ensure it is fair and open with tenants.

Star tenants who have any questions about the investigation recommendations can contact Star's Code Compliance Officer, Lynne Winter at pubscode@starpubs.co.uk or the PCA team at office@pubscodeadjudicator.gov.uk.

End

Minister for the Armed Forces **statement on the UN Peacekeeping** **Mission in Mali**

West Africa is an important region for the United Kingdom and our allies across Europe. And the UK is strongly committed to supporting the UN to deliver its peacekeeping commitments around the world. That is why since 2018 we had been supporting the French-led counter-terrorism mission in Mali with

CH-47 Chinook helicopters under Operation BARKHANE and more recently, since 2020, through the deployment of a Long Range Reconnaissance Group as part of the UN's MINUSMA peacekeeping mission.

The House will be aware, however, that in February, President Macron announced the drawdown of French troops in Mali and was joined in that announcement by all other European nations, as well as Canada, that were contributing to the French-led Operations BARKHANE and TAKUBA. In March, Sweden announced that it would be leaving the UN's MINUSMA mission.

Today, Mr Speaker, I can announce that the UK contingent will also now be leaving the MINUSMA mission earlier than planned.

Mr Speaker, we should be clear that responsibility for all of this sits in Bamako. Two coups in three years have undermined international efforts to advance peace. On my most recent visit last November, I met with the Malian Defence Minister and implored him to see the huge value of the French-led international effort in his country.

However, soon afterwards, the Malian Government began working with the Russian mercenary group Wagner and actively sought to interfere with the work of both the French-led and UN missions. The Wagner group is linked to mass human rights abuses. The Malian government's partnership with Wagner group is counterproductive to lasting stability and security in their region.

Mr Speaker, this Government cannot deploy our nation's military to provide security when the host country's Government is not willing to work with us to deliver lasting stability and security.

However, our commitment to West Africa and the important work of the UN is undiminished. We've been working closely with our allies to consider options for rebalancing our deployment alongside France, the EU and other like-minded allies. On Monday and Tuesday next week, Mr Speaker, I will join colleagues from across Europe and West Africa in Accra to co-ordinate our renewed response to instability in the Sahel.

This will be the first major gathering in support of the Accra Initiative – a West African-led solution focussed initially on preventing further contagion of the insurgency into Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Niger and tackling the growing levels of violence in Burkina Faso as well as Mali – making this a very timely conference indeed.

And of course, Mr Speaker, it is not just the UK military that will remain committed in West Africa – the UK will continue its commitment to Mali and the Sahel through our humanitarian, stabilisation and development assistance, working in close coordination with partners.

Nor, Mr Speaker, is this a reduction in our commitment to the United Nations. The UK remains an important contributor of troops through Operation TOSCA in Cyprus, and staff officers across several missions, and provide training to around 10,000 military, police and civilian peacekeepers from a range of countries annually. We remain the fifth largest financial contributor and

will continue to drive reform in New York. Indeed we are working with New York on developing a pilot – to be delivered through the British Peace Support Team based in Nairobi – to develop the capacity of UN troop contributing nations across Africa.

Mr Speaker, we will of course co-ordinate with allies as we drawdown from Gao and have been sharing our plans with them over recent months. The Army will be issuing orders imminently to reconfigure the next deployment to drawdown our presence. We are leaving the MINUSMA mission earlier than planned and are, of course, saddened by the way the Government in Bamako has made it so difficult for well-meaning nations to remain there.

The work of our troops has been outstanding, and they should be proud of what they've achieved there. But through the Chilcott Report and our wider experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, we – like so many allies – are clear that the military instrument should not be deployed on counterinsurgency or countering violent extremism missions unless there is a clear and compelling commitment towards political progress.

We will work quickly with allies in the region and across Europe to support the Accra Initiative to deliver security, stability and prosperity in West Africa. Our commitment to that region is undiminished.