

# De-escalation is key to finding a solution to peace efforts in Yemen

Thank you Mr President. Can I start by thanking the Special Envoy, the Under-Secretary-General, and the 2140 Committee Chair, the Permanent Representative of Albania, for each of their reports.

Since the previous Council meeting, we've heard there has been a notable escalation in the conflict, including reprehensible Houthi cross-border attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The latest attack on Abha International Airport wounded 12 civilians, whilst the 17th January attack on the UAE killed three civilians. The UK condemns in the strongest terms the Houthis' repeated terror attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, against Yemenis and Yemen's neighbours.

There remains no military solution to this conflict. As the Special Envoy said, such a hope is futile. We call upon all parties to de-escalate urgently and to engage with the new UN-led peace process. We welcome and fully endorse the Special Envoy's proposals to begin wide-ranging consultations with the parties to the conflict, and the principles for the UN plan. I commend the Special Envoy's inclusive approach which will ensure that a wide range of Yemenis have the opportunity to participate. The UK encourages all parties to participate and to engage constructively in the upcoming consultations.

We are also keen to ensure that regional partners are part of the solution. The UAE's presence on the Council is very welcome in this regard. The UK also hosted a Quint meeting on Yemen in late January where Oman, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the US came together to coordinate our approach to the conflict in Yemen. We reaffirmed during that meeting, our mutual support for the UN's efforts in finding an urgent and comprehensive political solution.

As you flagged Martin, the humanitarian response faces dire funding shortages. As we approach the seventh anniversary of the conflict, the humanitarian picture is bleak – in your words, a death sentence – and the World Food Program has warned that without funding now, only 3 million people will receive full food rations in February, and only 2 million in March. With the annual high level pledging event set for next month, the UK echoes your call Martin to encourage existing and new donors to pledge as generously as possible.

Finally Mr President, we welcome David Gressly's leadership and the update on the progress towards finding a solution to mitigating the risks posed by the SAFER tanker. It remains an urgent environmental concern, and the UK stands ready to help.

I thank you.

---

# Health Secretary statement on COVID-19 vaccines for five- to 11-year-olds

## Government response

A statement from the Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid on the vaccination of five- to 11-year-olds following updated advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation



Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

I have accepted the advice from the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to make a non-urgent offer of COVID-19 vaccines to all children aged five to 11 in England.

The NHS is already offering vaccines to at-risk children and those who live with immunosuppressed people in this age group.

The JCVI advice follows a thorough review by our independent medicines regulator, the MHRA, which approved Pfizer's paediatric vaccine as safe and effective for children aged five to 11.

Children without underlying health conditions are at low risk of serious illness from COVID-19 and the priority remains for the NHS to offer vaccines and boosters to adults and vulnerable young people, as well as to catch-up with other childhood immunisation programmes.

The NHS will prepare to extend this non-urgent offer to all children during April so parents can, if they want, take up the offer to increase protection against potential future waves of COVID-19 as we learn to live with this virus.

## Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent praises his cadets for being great ambassadors for their organisations

Brigadier Aitken praised his outgoing cadets for being able to speak fearlessly and confidently to all manner of people not just about themselves but about their cadet organisations.

Last year's Lord-Lieutenant cadets were not only able to come and support me on official events such as royal visits and medal presentations but were also able to be ambassadors for their own organisations by engaging in conversation people ranging from ordinary members of the public to mayors, MP's and MS's. Well done and thank you.

Brigadier Aitken congratulated his new cadets on their appointment and told them they had been selected for the role as they were among the 'best in their cadet organisations.' Speaking at his awards ceremony held on Thursday 10 February, the Brigadier also praised the work of the Reserve Forces for their efforts over the last year.

For the Reserves Forces throughout Gwent and throughout Wales it's been another busy year, with the regular armed forces having been busily deployed in this increasingly unstable world in which we live. Members of the Reserve Forces have either been serving side by side with the regular counterparts or have been backfilling them so that they themselves are able to go out and be deployed on operations. And of course covid has been a continuous backdrop to all of this with members of the Reserve Forces taking an active part in combating this ridiculous disease that is blighting our lives so much.

Six teenagers, Able Cadet Kaitlyn Summerhayes of Newport Sea Cadet Corps; Staff Cadet Sergeant Jake Thomas of Gwent and Powys Army Cadet Force; Cadet Sergeant Hamish Nicholl of Gwent and Powys Army Cadet Force; Cadet Flight Sergeant Iestyn Jones of No1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets; Cadet Flight Sergeant William Cocking of No1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets and Cadet Sergeant Hayley Gabica of Llanwern Combined Cadet Force were appointed to the role of Lord-Lieutenant cadet for 2022.

The role, which lasts for a year, includes attendance with the Brigadier, who acts as the Queen's representative, at a number of official engagements such as Remembrance events, Royal visits and parades. Able Cadet Kaitlyn Summerhayes from Newport is driven to be the best cadet she can be and encourages others to do the same. Staff Cadet Sergeant Jake Thomas from Tredegar joined as a twelve-year-old with his love of military music being evident from the beginning.

While on summer camp Cadet Sergeant Hamish Nicholl showed his calibre by assisting another cadet who was suffering a medical episode ensuring she was receiving the care needed.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Iestyn Jones from Cwmbran is a model non-commissioned officer who leads, inspires and motivates all who meet him.

Cadet Sergeant William Cocking of Newport is a committed and motivated cadet who has been active at squadron, wing and regional level in multiple areas of cadet life. Outside of cadets he raised £1,161 for St David's Hospice Care by walking 26 miles in one day.

Cadet Sergeant Hayley Gabica of Newport showed great commitment by not only continuing to parade virtually during lockdown, but also by delivering lessons and presentations to keep the junior cadets enthused.

They will follow in the footsteps of Cadet Warrant Officer Piotr Dabski of No1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets; Cadet Warrant Officer Katie Mavroudis-Stephens of No1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets; Cadet Sergeant Max Pullen of Llanwern Combined Cadet Force and Cadet Lance Corporal Edward Nock of Monmouth Combined Cadet Force who were awarded the Lord-Lieutenant's Certificate and Badge for being the 2021 representatives.

Five people were recognised for their outstanding service and devotion to duty and awarded the Lord-Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit.

These included Lance Corporal James Andrews of 3 Royal Welsh, Captain Kim Smith of Gwent and Powys Army Cadet Force and Mrs Irene (Ann) Bowen of Newport Sea Cadet Corps.

Although a reservist, Lance Corporal Andrews' first-rate musical ability led him to being selected to play in the British Army Brass Band. Captain Smith from Newport never lets anyone down and her focus is on ensuring that both adult volunteers and cadets have a fulfilled cadet experience and strive to achieve their dreams.

While volunteer treasurer of Newport Sea Cadets, Mrs Bowen from Newport was instrumental during lockdown in securing £100,000 of funding for renovation work to the unit building. Unfortunately, while the unit was being renovated it was hit by a devastating flood, undoing months of work and destroying vast amounts of equipment.

Undeterred, Mrs Bowen was instrumental in enabling the unit to 'rise from the ashes' through countless letters, emails and phone calls to source the support and equipment the unit needed to reopen.

Two adult volunteers in No 1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets, Squadron leader Kenneth Lavender and Flight Lieutenant Wayne Clark, also received Lord-Lieutenant Certificates of Merit.

Squadron Leader Lavender from Newport worked exceptionally hard during the pandemic to ensure his sector did not suffer unnecessarily during lockdown while Flight Lieutenant Clark from Abertillery transformed 2167 Tredegar Squadron, which was ear-marked for closure, into one of the strongest units in No 1 Welsh Wing within 18 months.

There are nearly 5,000 Cadets in Wales who gain skills and qualifications through working with local communities, charities and taking part in a variety of practical activities. The cadet syllabus is delivered by 1,500 volunteering adult Instructors and civilian assistants, who give up their spare time on weeknights and weekends. The virtual awards event was organised and broadcast by the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (RFCA) for Wales – an organisation that has supported the Armed Forces for over 100 years.

---

## Reducing carbon footprints

Insurance experts at the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) are working with the government as it supports schools in England to reduce their carbon footprints.

The [Risk Protection Arrangement](#) (RPA) is an alternative to insurance for schools and academies where losses that arise are covered by government funds. The Department for Education (DfE) is overseeing the arrangement, with GAD providing specialist actuarial support in areas such as pricing and provisioning.

The RPA also considers potential risks and how to respond to claims that arise. This can be a part of the government's wider net zero agenda. The DfE is considering initiatives to decarbonise the school estate including ways to replace traditional oil, gas, and coal boilers with heat pumps.

## **Building back better**

While rare, schools can suffer significant damage following a fire, flood, or storm and the RPA covers this risk.

Traditional insurance replaces like-for-like after such a loss. However, the RPA has additional flexibility to consider the way in which school buildings and equipment should be restored.

Rebuilding after a major loss can provide a cost-effective opportunity to 'build back better'. It can also improve the school's physical infrastructure and reduce the carbon footprint.

An example of this is Morecambe Bay Academy, in Lancashire. Significant flooding in August 2020 damaged the boiler room and meant substantial repairs were required. Rather than replacing the gas-fired boiler, the RPA used the restoration funds to help finance the installation of a ground source heat pump.

This innovative pilot scheme is used to help forecast the cost and carbon savings of future interventions.

## **Future interventions**

GAD identified schools where the boilers were likely to need replacement soon by using DfE data. This data includes granular information on the physical condition of school buildings and plant.

DfE has worked in partnership with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to secure funding for heat decarbonisation plans for these schools.

These plans, alongside estimates of the carbon savings they will create, will be used to bid for capital funding over the coming year from initiatives such as the [Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund](#).

## **Pilots and models**

For the wider heat decarbonisation programme, GAD analysed the DfE data to provide the initial list of schools where an intervention was most likely to be needed. We also:

- modelled the potential carbon savings connected to these initiatives
- provided high level estimates to support immediate pilots
- worked with other government departments to develop more detailed models

## **Improving systems**

Matt Kirkpatrick, project lead in GAD said: “These initiatives demonstrate the power of connecting expertise from across government to help tackle one of the most pressing issues of our time.

“The RPA continues to provide fantastic value for money for schools and academies as an alternative to commercial insurance and is now an effective vehicle for decarbonising the public sector.”

---

# City Deal project showcases technology for athletes

UK Government Minister David TC Davies has visited the £132 million Swansea Bay City Deal Campuses project to see how the technology for Smart Garments has been developed and was used by athletes, including medal winners, in last year's Tokyo Olympics.

The wearable technology was designed by Swansea University experts who invented a flexible heater using carbon-based stretchable graphene ink that can be directly attached to fabric. This keeps muscle temperature at a constant level which can improve an athlete's performance.

He also learned about a ground-breaking partnership between Swansea University academics, the local Health Boards and industry that studies the demands of elite, professional cyclists with Type 1 Diabetes in order to gain a better understanding of glucose management and develop recommendations for others with the condition.

The Swansea Bay City Deal Campuses project is supported by funding from the UK and Welsh Governments as part of the Swansea Bay City Deal. The investment will be used to promote innovation and business growth in the expanding Medical and Sports Technology sectors and lead to more products, like Smart Garments, being developed.

The project is planned to generate over 1,000 jobs in the Swansea area and is predicted to be worth over £150 million to the regional economy by 2033.

It is led by Swansea University, in partnership with Swansea Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Hywel Dda University Health Board, a Regional Collaboration for Health (ARCH) Partnership and key private sector partners. Delivered in two phases, the project is located in Singleton and Morriston.

Phase one, which will utilise City Deal funding over the next three years, will deliver 2000m<sup>2</sup> of dedicated research and innovation space within the Sketty Lane Sports Park at the Swansea University Singleton Campus. This will establish an environment which supports the development, testing and evaluation of medical, health, well-being and sports technologies, as well as commercial partnerships. In addition, phase one will also include the refurbishment of an existing building at Morriston Hospital. This site will create a 700m<sup>2</sup> Institute of Life Sciences space for commercial and academic collaboration alongside clinical research and development.

Once the first phase is complete, it will unlock the development potential of major expansion at both sites over the next 12 years. This will further establish the area at the forefront of health, sports, and science, whilst driving economic development and adding value to the region. This is expected to include a 55-acre Innovation Park with space for SMEs and large companies in the booming Sports Technology and Medical Technology sector. At the

Singleton Campus the second phase will allow for the creation of a centre of excellence within sport with world-class facilities for elite teams and community sports, along with sports technology and research.

**Councillor Rob Stewart, Chairman of the Swansea Bay City Deal's Joint Committee, said**

We are delighted to welcome Minister David T C Davies to Swansea University with the approval of the Campuses Business Case. Led by Swansea University, this project will build on regional expertise in life science, well-being, and clinical innovation which will help prevent ill-health, develop better treatments and improve quality of life. It will also create over 1,000 well-paid jobs, boost the economy and help attract significant additional investment.

The Campuses project is the final one in the Swansea Bay City Deals' portfolio to be approved, and we are very proud to achieve this significant milestone. We are now focusing on delivering the entire portfolio in order to build a more prosperous region for our residents as well as accelerating our economic recovery from the pandemic.

**UK Government Minister in Wales, David TC Davies added**

I very much enjoyed seeing the work that is already underway on this project. Everyone involved has huge ambition and drive, as well as some truly innovative ideas and it was a pleasure to meet all those working so hard to make it a success.

The UK Government is delighted to be funding this ambitious project, which will build on everything that I've seen, and will make Swansea University, along with their partners, leaders in 21st century Medical and Sports Technology.

As well as a huge boost to jobs and the local economy, the technology that will be developed will improve the health and wellbeing of people both in Swansea and beyond.

**Professor Paul Boyle, Vice-Chancellor of Swansea University said**

Swansea University is delighted that this major regional initiative, in collaboration with Swansea Council, our local health boards and key private sector partners has now been approved.

Harnessing the thriving health and life science ecosystem in the Swansea Bay City Region, this project will establish an international centre for innovation in healthcare and medicine

within the Sketty Lane Sports Park on our historic Singleton Campus, generating positive impact for population health and supporting the development of an innovative Sports Tech industry here in Wales. It will support our university in realising our regional ambitions for sport, enabling us to champion well-being and preventative health, and support public participation in sport across the lifespan.

The Campuses project exemplifies what can be achieved through effective cross-sector collaboration, and we are proud to partner with business and government for the wider benefit of our region.

### **Mark Hackett, Chief Executive Officer. Swansea Bay University Health Board said**

The value of research and development to the health economy in the Swansea Bay region cannot be underestimated. Not only does this attract high quality jobs and investment to the area, but it paves the way for exciting opportunities for staff and patients to be involved at the forefront of exciting developments and innovative treatment.

This Swansea Bay City Deal Campuses project is just the start, and as our reputation as a high quality research and development grows, it will also help us attract even more high calibre staff. As a health board we are delighted to be able to accommodate a key part of this project on our Morriston Hospital site, bringing this cutting edge research into the heart of healthcare.

### **Welsh Government Economy Minister Vaughan Gething added**

The Welsh Government has a clear focus on creating a stronger, fairer, greener economic future. We want Wales to be a country that's at the forefront of innovating new technologies that will benefit people in their day-to-day lives. The significant investment we're making as part of the Swansea Bay City Deal will further enhance Wales' leading role in advanced medical technologies and science. It will support businesses to exploit links with academia, bringing world-leading research out of the labs and industry and into society, for the benefit of our people and economy.

The Swansea Bay City Deal is an investment of up to £1.3 billion in a portfolio of nine major programmes and projects across the Swansea Bay City Region, which are together worth over £1.8 billion and 9,000 jobs to the region's economy in coming years.

Funded by the UK Government, the Welsh Government, the public sector and the private sector, the City Deal is being led by Carmarthenshire Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Pembrokeshire Council and Swansea Council, in partnership with Swansea University, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Swansea Bay University Health Board and Hywel Dda University Health Board.