

# [Vital national security legislation becomes law](#)

News story

On Monday, the Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) Act received Royal Assent and became law.



The [Covert Human Intelligence Sources \(CHIS\) Act](#) provides a clear and consistent statutory basis so that our intelligence and enforcement agencies and public bodies have the right tools to keep us safe.

This longstanding critical capability supports the work of undercover agents in preventing and safeguarding victims from serious crimes, including terrorism, by ensuring they can gain the trust of those under investigation.

Robust independent oversight of the capability is provided by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner. All authorisations must be notified to his office within seven days of being granted, providing him with real-time oversight of all criminal conduct authorisations.

He will also have oversight of the enhanced safeguards in place for juvenile and vulnerable adult CHIS.

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## [Human Rights Council 46: UK Statement on the Rights of Persons with](#)

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## WTO General Council: UK statements

### **Item 8 – Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions – Request from India**

Thank you Chair, and with thanks to India for its statement I'd like to make three points:

First, the United Kingdom is a strong supporter of the moratorium on imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions and we fully support making it permanent because the gains from trade and investment are so significant including for developing countries.

Second, the United Kingdom welcomes the continued engagement by Members on this important issue. Whilst there are clearly different views across the Membership on the moratorium, we consider it important that the Work Programme on E-Commerce continues to be the forum where these views are discussed and debated, although like others we see no need to make it a standing item on the General Council agenda.

Third, as COVID-19 continues to impact us all Digital Trade and Digital Platforms have been essential in mitigating the economic and other consequences of the pandemic, and will be critical to our economic recovery after the pandemic.

If the WTO is unable to agree rules on e-commerce that reality will change. It will just mean that the rules on e-commerce will get written elsewhere, as they have been for the last three decades, without the broad representation that the WTO provides. That is why we believe that the work being delivered through the JSI on e-commerce to deliver global rules on digital trade is important for both developing and developed countries, and we continue to actively support those discussions.

Thank you, Chair.

## **Item 9 – Call to Prevent Export Restrictions on Covid-19 Vaccines: Communication from Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama and Paraguay**

Thank you, Chair, and thanks to Colombia and the other proponents for tabling this paper. This is an important debate.

We all have an interest in supporting supply chains, to enable businesses across the globe to get medical goods to those that need them. Open trade in vaccines is also an essential precondition if we are to ramp-up global vaccine production to meet global demand. Consequently, we believe trade restrictive barriers on vaccines are in nobody's interest.

The United Kingdom looks forward to continuing cooperation with all WTO Members on how, together, we can facilitate the production of and trade in vaccines and other medical goods needed to effectively tackle this pandemic and respond to the challenge that our Director General set out yesterday, including by exploring the ideas set out by the European Union today.

Thank you, Chair.

## **Item 10 – Introduction of a Paper on ‘Legal Status of Joint Statement Initiatives and their Negotiated Outcomes’: Request from India and South Africa**

Thank you, Chair.

I'd thank India and South Africa for their paper. However, the United Kingdom does not share the view that the work of the Joint Statement Initiatives is inconsistent with the rights and obligations of Members or the appropriate functions of the WTO.

These JSI discussions have brought much-needed energy and dynamism to the WTO, enabling a significant proportion of the Membership to make vital progress on areas where new rules and commitments are urgently needed to update the global trading system. The JSIs are some of the most important reforms undertaken at the WTO.

We would encourage participants of the JSIs to continue attracting wider interest and participation from across the Membership. This will ensure these negotiations are as inclusive as possible and pave the way for them to be adopted multilaterally in future and for the WTO to remain relevant.

Thank you, Chair.

## **Item 11 – Trade and Health: Covid-19 and Beyond: Update from Canada**

Thank you, Chair, and many thanks to Canada for the update on the next steps on the Trade and Health Initiative and for the Ottawa Group's leadership on this issue.

This pandemic is a shared global challenge, and we have a shared opportunity to help tackle it for the benefit of citizens through action in this House.

As such, the UK has already committed to the operative commitments with regards to tariff liberalisation and approach to export restrictions as laid out in the text of the initiative.

So Chair, the United Kingdom looks forward to working together with the Members of the Ottawa Group as well as other Members across the WTO as this critical work evolves.

Thank you, Chair.

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## [Future and Senior Leaders Schemes](#) [knowledge exchange sessions](#)

News story

Hear from analysts across government on why you should apply for these exciting leadership schemes



Interested in progressing your career? Then you won't want to miss out on your chance to be part of the current intake of the [Future Leaders Scheme \(FLS\)](#) and [Senior Leaders Scheme \(SLS\)](#). Applications close at midday on Friday 12 March and we have spoken to some past participants who give their advice and tell us what the experience was like for them;

**Josh Roebuck (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy), FLS**

"My advice would be to really think about what you want to get out of the FLS before you get into the application process. This is something that will be tested throughout the process. It's not just a shiny badge that looks good on

a CV, and it's worth speaking to colleagues who have been on the scheme to determine whether it's right for you compared to other development opportunities.

The FLS has helped me think about and structure development in a different way. Originally, I thought about development in the way of hoping someone would give me a manual setting out the route to leadership roles. I'm thinking much more now about the types of things I want to develop and therefore the types of roles that will allow me to do that beyond the specific policy area, be that working in an organisation with a mix of practitioners and generalists, or a role with a delivery mindset etc."

### **Amy Coleman (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport), FLS**

"The really big thing that I got out of it was, having seen the full diversity in the Civil Service, to be a bit more confident to represent the needs of analysis within the organisation, and to really stand up for those a little bit more rather than allowing the policy process to take over."

### **Ben Cropper (Cabinet Office), SLS**

"The network gained from the SLS is really important. There are basically 20 colleagues who are all in a similar position and are all sharing ideas on what roles are about, who should go for what, and being really supportive in preparing for interviews.

It totally broadened my horizon and widened my perspective on what would be interesting jobs to do in government. I had roughly ten years in the Treasury before I went on the scheme which does tend to give you quite an insular mindset on what you can do. I would now be really keen to look at jobs outside the Whitehall bubble, purely because I went on the SLS."

If you weren't able to attend the Knowledge Exchange Sessions hosted by the Analysis Function in February but would like to find out more from analysts currently on the schemes, please contact the Analysis Function team [analysis.function@ons.gov.uk](mailto:analysis.function@ons.gov.uk) and we can share a video recording of the session with you.

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**[Top high street chain pays for its](#)**

# recycling error

Four companies paid a total of £26,000, plus costs, after they failed to comply with packaging waste regulations designed to protect the environment.

A well-known high-street name is among 4 retailers contributing thousands of pounds to charity after failing to comply with the law. For 5 years, Zara Home UK Ltd, which sells homeware products in stores and online, broke rules which ensure that businesses fund the recycling of the packaging waste that they place on the UK market.

Zara also avoided paying a charge based on how much packaging the company got through in the course of its business in the same period, between 2010 and 2015.

In addition to Zara Home, 3 other clothing retailers similarly failed to comply with the packaging waste regulations over a number of years: Bershka UK Ltd, Pull & Bear UK Ltd, and Massimo Dutti UK Ltd. All 4 businesses, which are owned by the same parent company, identified their non-compliance and worked alongside the Environment Agency to address their failings.

Environment Agency officer Jonathan Coldicott said:

Any company producing more than 50 tonnes of packaging a year, and with a turnover of above £2 million, must register with the Environment Agency or a packaging compliance scheme, and meet their responsibilities for recycling waste packaging.

If companies fail to meet their obligations under environmental law, we will take action to ensure that they change their ways.

The Environment Agency accepted enforcement undertaking offers from all 4 companies, a type of civil sanction which allows businesses to make amends for environmental damage and breaches, while demonstrating how they will comply with the law in future.

As part of the enforcement undertakings, the companies have put in place additional compliance measures and are making financial contributions to 2 charities working to help the environment:

- Keep Britain Tidy will receive a total of £13,000 towards its EcoSchools project, educating children to take action on litter and waste
- The Marine Conservation Society will also receive £13,000 towards its Beachwatch Programme, which funds litter-picks on UK beaches

Jonathan added:

The companies also agreed to take measures to ensure they comply

with their packaging waste responsibilities in the future.

As well as the charitable contributions, they paid the Environment Agency's full costs.

We're satisfied that they won't repeat their mistakes again.

The Environment Agency uses enforcement undertakings for suitable cases. It reserves prosecutions for cases where evidence shows high levels of culpability and serious environmental harm.

Anyone who spots pollution should report it to the Environment Agency via its free 24-hour incident hotline: 0800 80 70 60.