

Ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines in contexts affected by conflict and insecurity

- UK proposes new Security Council Resolution for temporary ceasefires and co-ordinated action on equitable access to vaccines
- UK urges coordinated effort to enable vaccine distribution and for the protection of humanitarian and health workers
- read the related press release: [UK calls for ceasefires to vaccinate people against COVID-19](#)

Your Excellencies, I am very pleased and honoured to address this first ever Security Council meeting on vaccinations.

It is I think right that we bring the full weight of the Security Council and wider UN system to bear on ending this appalling pandemic.

The virus is still on the rise globally, with the emergence of new, more transmissible variants, which has itself driven increased transmission in most regions, I think it's fair to say. But, with vaccines approved and being rolled out, we now have that opportunity to fight back.

At last, we can genuinely say that we see the light at the end of the tunnel, or at least a light that is drawing closer to us. But this has to be a global effort.

The pandemic isn't under control anywhere until it's under control everywhere. And we need to think of ourselves as a team working together against a common and very deadly enemy.

That is the reality of our struggle. No nation is truly safe until we are all safe.

In terms of what that means for us, I think it means have to work to secure access to vaccines around the world, including in the hardest to reach places, including places of conflict and other types of insecurity.

And at present, we know that more than 160 million people worldwide are at risk of being excluded from vaccinations because of instability and conflict.

So we've got a real challenge meet the shortfalls in securing supplies, delivering vaccinations on the ground.

There are many challenges to achieving this – from securing comprehensive humanitarian access to managing vaccine storage.

Overcoming all of these challenges and the compound challenge they present will require greater national, regional and international cooperation and the

UN playing a key coordinating role as we bring those efforts together.

Local ceasefires are essential to enable life-saving vaccinations to take place. And they are essential to protect the brave health workers and humanitarian workers working in incredibly challenging conditions in conflict zones who are striving to deliver that help, that vital lifesaving help to those who need it most.

Ceasefires have been used to vaccinate the most vulnerable communities in the past. There is no reason we can't do this. There's no reason why we can't, with the will that we can muster, come together to overcome the challenges. We have seen it in the past to deliver Polio vaccines to children in Afghanistan, just to take one example.

Likewise, the suspension or postponement of routine non-COVID vaccination campaigns during the pandemic I think is another grave concern for all of us. The rollout of COVID vaccines shouldn't displace those programmes. They have to go hand in hand.

On 1 July last year, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2532 on fighting COVID-19 in the most vulnerable countries. Further action is needed now by the Council to call for ceasefires specifically to enable COVID vaccines to be carried out in those areas so badly affected by conflict.

That's why we are proposing a new Resolution for the Council's consideration.

The COVAX Facility is due to start rolling out vaccines this month. We were proud to host its launch at the Global Vaccine Summit last June – and we're proud to be one of Gavi's largest donors. We will continue to keep up that support.

By calling for vaccination ceasefires – and by calling for COVID-19 vaccination plans to include all high-risk populations, including refugees – this Resolution and this Council really has an opportunity help get vaccines distributed to the most vulnerable communities across the planet.

It would help ensure full access for humanitarian and medical personnel. It would help protect them as they go about their challenging work.

So I would just close my remarks on behalf of UK by urging all members of the Security Council to support the swift and full adoption of this Resolution.

Our scientists have done incredible work in developing the vaccine.

We must work together now to get those vaccines to the most hard to reach communities. And those most vulnerable in those hard to reach communities.

We cannot turn away while those in conflict zones are denied this essential, critical protection from the virus.

We in this Council have an opportunity – and I believe we have a moral duty – to act.

Thank you.

New footbridge to be provide safe passage over A5

Highways England is replacing a reinforced concrete bridge that crosses the A5 at Atherstone, north Warwickshire, with a new steel one that will last for years to come.

It will be built close to the existing one, which serves the Queen Elizabeth Academy, to ensure there is a crossing point and minimise the disruption for pedestrians and the local community.

Highways England Project Manager, Dave Lynch, said:

It's important pedestrians and cyclists are able to cross our roads safely.

We are replacing the existing bridge with a new one that is more accessible, meets the current standards and will reduce the need for extensive maintenance to be carried out on the bridge for many years.

The new wider bridge can be safely used by both pedestrians and cyclists and the gradient of the new access ramps will meet modern standards.

The headroom clearance of the bridge over traffic using the dual carriageway will also be altered to meet current regulations.

The installation will be carried out in two phases. Early works are taking place this week which will include vegetation clearance and preparation for a contraflow which will be used during the main works.

To ensure the safety of road workers while the work takes place, a number of road closures will be needed. The A5 will be closed in both eastbound and westbound directions on the following dates:

- 8pm on Friday 19 February to 6am on Monday 22 February
- 7am on Saturday 27 February to 7pm on Sunday 28 February
- 8pm on Saturday 13 March to 6am on Monday 15 March

Outside of these times there will be a lane closure and a 50mph speed limit.

A clearly signed diversion route, agreed with the local authority, will be in place during the road closures.

The main works will begin in July which will involve building the foundations and supports for the new bridge and installation of the structure. The existing bridge will be demolished at a later date.

Most of this work will be carried out using the contraflow and lane closures and without the need for further full road closures.

For regular updates, [sign up to our scheme mailing list](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Richard Sharp is confirmed as the new BBC Board Chair

News story

Following Privy Council approval on 10 February, Richard Sharp has been appointed for 4 years from 16 February 2021 to 15 February 2025.



Richard Sharp has over 30 years of experience in the financial sector, including commercial banking, derivatives, fixed income, private equity and investment banking. He spent 23 years at Goldman Sachs, joining in 1984 to start and head its European Capital Markets Group. He subsequently held a number of senior roles, most recently as Chairman of Goldman Sachs' principal investment business in Europe. Prior to this, he worked in both commercial banking and investment banking for JP Morgan. He also served as a Director of

Oncimmune, and is a former Chairman and an Emeritus Trustee of the Royal Academy and a Director of International Rescue UK.

Mr Sharp was a member of the Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee (FPC) from its formal inception in 2013 through to April 2019. The FPC is the entity charged by the UK Government with the powers and the duty to ensure financial stability in the UK. Richard was a Partner of Goldman Sachs and was a member of the European Management Committee.

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Notes

This appointment process was run in accordance with the [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#).

Remuneration for the new BBC Chair will be £160,000 annual salary for 3 to 4 days per week. The BBC Board comprises fourteen members: a non-executive Chair, a designated non-executive member for each of the Nations of the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales); five other non-executive members and four executive members, including the BBC Director-General. The Chair and four non-executive members for the Nations are appointed by The Queen-in-Council. The other non-executive members are appointed by the BBC Board through its nominations committee. The executive members are also appointed by the Board through its nominations committee.

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DHSC SSRB remit letter: 2021 to 2022

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