

Appointment of John Raine as new Chair of the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission

Press release

John Raine CMG OBE has been appointed as new Chair of the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission.



John Raine CMG OBE served the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office for 33 years. His overseas postings included Kuwait, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Baghdad and Islamabad. As a senior member of the national security community, John's bilateral and multilateral diplomatic work involved working extensively with US administrations and the US military on issues related to international coordination and security.

John is now a Senior Advisor at the IISS (International Institute for Strategic Affairs), and a non-executive director of the HSBC Bank of the Middle East. He is also the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Governors for the University of Lincoln, and serves as a Trustee for the HALO Trust.

The Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission, a non-departmental public body, is accountable to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. The Commission is responsible for the Marshall Scholarship programme, which provides scholarships to talented Americans to study in the UK. Up to fifty scholars are selected each year to study in any field at graduate level at a UK institution. As future leaders, with a lasting understanding of the UK's institutions and society, Marshall Scholars strengthen the enduring relationship between the UK and the USA, their governments, their institutions and their people.

[Marshall Scholarship](#)

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UK announces sanctions against Zimbabwe security chiefs

- UK announces first set of designations of individuals under the UK's Zimbabwe sanctions regime
- Human rights violations in 2019 saw protestors killed for expressing right to free speech and protest
- Sanctions go hand-in-hand with UK efforts to hold the Government of Zimbabwe to account and to make good on its promise to deliver much-needed crucial reforms.

Four Zimbabwean security sector chiefs responsible for serious human rights violations – including the deaths of 23 Zimbabwean protestors – have been designated under the UK's new autonomous sanctions regime, UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced today.

Today's announcement ensures these individuals cannot freely travel to the UK, channel money through UK banks or profit from our economy. These restrictive measures are not targeted at, nor intended to impact, the wider economy and the people of Zimbabwe.

Following the UK's departure from the European Union and the end of the Transition Period, the UK can now pursue an independent sanctions policy reflecting our foreign policy and national security interests. Today's designations are the first the UK has made of individuals under the UK's Zimbabwe autonomous sanctions regime, which came into force at 11pm on 31 December 2020.

The new sanctions include a travel ban and asset freeze on four officials:

- Owen Ncube, Minister for State Security;
- Isaac Moyo, Director General of the Central Intelligence Organisation;
- Godwin Matanga, Commissioner General of the Zimbabwe Republic Police; and
- Anselem Sanyatwe, former Brigadier General, Commander of the Presidential Guard and Tactical Commander of the National Reaction Force.

These targeted designations hold to account those responsible for the worst human rights violations against the people of Zimbabwe since President Emmerson Mnangagwa took power in November 2017. This includes a state-sponsored crackdown against protests in January 2019 that resulted in the deaths of 17 Zimbabweans and post-election violence in August 2018 in which six protestors lost their lives.

Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab said:

These sanctions send a clear message that we will hold to account those responsible for the most egregious human rights violations, including the deaths of innocent Zimbabweans.

These sanctions target senior individuals in the Government, and not ordinary Zimbabweans. We will continue to press for the necessary political and economic reforms that will benefit all Zimbabweans.

The UK's autonomous Zimbabwe sanctions regime seeks to encourage the Government of Zimbabwe to respect democratic principles and institutions; refrain from the repression of civil society; and to comply with international human rights law and to respect human rights.

These sanctions are in addition to our work to hold the Government of Zimbabwe to account in implementing genuine political and economic reforms that benefit all Zimbabweans.

Contrary to claims by those who seek to stop institutional reform and respect for human rights in Zimbabwe, these sanctions will not deter investment into the country. Instead, UK investors repeatedly highlight three concerns that prevent them from investing in Zimbabwe: poorly-managed currency; arbitrary property rights and the legal system.

We will continue to support the Zimbabwean people through our aid programme, focusing on tackling poverty, humanitarian assistance, standing up for human rights and supporting Zimbabwe's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. None of this aid goes directly through Government of Zimbabwe systems.

Notes to Editors:

1. The UK Zimbabwe Autonomous Regime comprises targeted travel bans and asset freezes, as well as trade restrictions on military items and items that could be used for internal repression. The regime came fully into force on 31 December 2020 at the end of the EU transition period. This is the first time that the UK has used its autonomous Zimbabwe sanctions regime to impose travel bans and asset freezes against individuals. You can find a link to the legislation [here](#). This is a different sanctions regime to the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 which launched in July 2020.
2. The Motlanthe Commission report found that the Zimbabwean security services were responsible for 6 deaths and 35 injuries during the 1 August 2018 protests. The report also concluded that the use of live ammunition on civilians was "clearly unjustified and disproportionate".
3. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission's January 28 2019 report on the response to the January 2019 fuel protests found that law enforcement agents seemed to "resort to use of brute, excessive and disproportionate

force in most circumstances thereby causing avoidable loss of life and also worsening the situation", resulting in the deaths of 17 people. A Human Rights Watch report details allegations of rape and indiscriminate door-to-door raids by the Zimbabwean security services.

Over 30 years of the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme

For over 30 years the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme has helped victims of crime get justice.

The scheme was launched in 1989 following public outcry over a series of controversial sentencing decisions, including the 1986 'Ealing vicarage rape' case where 21-year-old Jill Saward was raped by burglars at her father's vicarage.

The first ULS hearing took place in July 1989. In this case, a man who committed incest on his daughter had his sentence doubled from 3 to 6 years in prison. The scheme has since helped thousands of victims and their families get justice, and in an important hearing last year two of the UK's most prolific rapists – Joseph McCann and Reynhard Sinaga – had their sentences increased by 10 years, meaning that both offenders should now serve at least 40 years in prison before they can be released.

In 2019 alone, 63 offenders had their sentences increased under the scheme – 16 of those were given custodial sentences after avoiding prison time at their original sentencing.

Since it launched, the scheme has been expanded 6 times and now includes a range of terror-related offences, all serious sexual offences, threats to kill, child cruelty, people trafficking and modern slavery, and many racially and religiously aggravated offences. Most recently, sexual offences involving an abuse of trust, indecent images offences and domestic abuse offences were added to the scheme.

Commenting on the anniversary, Attorney General, the Rt. Hon. Suella Braverman QC MP said:

For over 30 years, the ULS scheme has helped victims of crime and their loved ones get justice. The scheme includes many more offences now than it did when it was first launched, allowing us to look at more sentences which don't appear to fit the crime.

In the vast majority of cases, judges get it right, but the scheme is important to ensure that certain cases can be reviewed where there may have been a gross error in the sentencing decision.

The ULS scheme allows prosecutors, victims of crime and members of the public to ask for certain Crown Court sentences to be reviewed by the Law Officers if they think the sentence is far too low. Some cases referred to the Court of Appeal can also offer guidance for future sentencing decisions.

Anyone can ask for a sentence to be reviewed if they think it is too low, and only one person needs to ask for it to be considered. Further requests do not lend any extra weight as the decision to refer a sentence as too low can only be based on the legal threshold. The Law Officers have 28 days from the date of sentencing to refer a case to the Court of Appeal, so it's important for them to receive a referral as early as possible in order to properly consider a case.

Notes to editors

1. Information on the scheme can be found [here](#).
2. The ULS scheme came into force on 1 February 1989 and was legislated for within the Criminal Justice Act 1988.
3. Under the ULS scheme a case must be referred to the Court of Appeal within 28 days of the date of sentencing. This deadline cannot be extended and in order to ensure we have time to properly consider a case we ask that referrals are made early in the process. It is very difficult to consider a case which is submitted late and it is not possible to do so outside of working hours.
4. The Law Officers act independently of Government when deciding on Unduly Lenient Sentences, also known as acting as 'Guardian of the public interest'.
5. The 2019 annual statistics can be found [here](#).
6. The 2020 annual statistics will be published later this year when the outcome of all cases referred to the Law Officers in 2020 is known.

Solicitors and CPS join professional users' access scheme

From today (1 February), solicitors will be able to register for the [professional users' access scheme](#), which permits enhanced access through security in courts and tribunals for registered holders with the appropriate scheme ID.

The London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association (LCCSA) and Criminal Law Solicitors Association (CLSA) have become the latest legal professional

organisations to sign up, following the Bar Council which has been part of the scheme since it launched in May 2019. Alongside this, HMCTS is also delighted to welcome the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as a member organisation, demonstrating the continued broadening of the scheme to a wider cohort of professional court users.

Significantly, access to the LCCSA and CLSA registration portal is not restricted to their membership only, and all solicitors with a practising certificate are able to sign up via this route from today, a move that has been advanced by investment and support from the Law Society.

Today's news means that barristers, solicitors and CPS staff can now benefit from entering HMCTS buildings without needing a [routine security search](#) on each visit, by verifying credentials which satisfy our robust, risk-based safety and security policy.

This benefits scheme members and assists the smooth running of courts and tribunals by helping to minimise delays on entry. Separate fast-access lanes for members are available during the busiest times of the day, where possible. A QR code on members' ID cards is scanned to enable entry without further security checks, other than random screenings.

The professional users' access scheme is currently rolled out at over [300 HMCTS sites](#).

Welcoming today's news, President of the LCCSA, Mark Troman, said:

Solicitors play a crucial role in the day-to-day administration of justice in court and tribunals across England and Wales. From today their trusted status will be recognised and this will enable faster, less restrictive access to court buildings and allow them to get on with their work.

I'm delighted we're now in a position to roll out registration for the access scheme, not just to LCCSA members, but all practising solicitors in England and Wales, whom I strongly encourage to apply via our website.

Daniel Bonich, Chair of the CLSA, gave his reflections:

We are delighted to be able to deliver on one of the most frequent requests from our members. This scheme is recognition of the crucial role our members and fellow solicitors play in the proper administration of justice. We are pleased that their status as officers of the court has been so recognised and awarded 'trusted status' which will enable much improved and quicker access to court buildings.

We are also thrilled to be able to make these cards available not just to our members, but all practicing solicitors in England and

Wales, thanks to the assistance of the Law Society, and we look forward to issuing these cards via our website.

President of the Law Society of England and Wales, David Greene, added:

The work solicitors do underpins justice. We're therefore very pleased that we've been able to come to an arrangement with partner organisations so our members can obtain ID which helps them fast-track into court premises in a way that helps court security for everyone using the courts or working there.

Mark Gray, Director of Operations, Digital and Commercial at the Crown Prosecution Service, said:

All our staff have passed security checks before joining us, so to enable fast track access for our regular attendance at court buildings is very welcome. As well as benefiting CPS professionals entering court for work by being quicker, the inclusion of more professionals into the scheme will free up capacity through security for others going to court. I would like to thank everyone involved both at the CPS and HMCTS who have worked to make it easier for us to enter our place of work without compromising safety for everyone using court.

The professional users' access scheme was jointly introduced by HMCTS and the Bar Council in response to concerns raised by legal practitioners in particular about queues to get into HMCTS buildings, and the frustration when personal items are confiscated for security reasons. This needed to be balanced against the requirement for tightened security processes to prevent dangerous weapons and other prohibited items from being brought into court.

Many participating HMCTS buildings have been able to maintain the scheme, which now has over 5,000 members, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with nearly all those that did need to temporarily pause operation to ensure social distancing, having resumed. As part of HMCTS' response to COVID, rollout to 26 new sites was brought forward and those locations went live during the summer. The number of legal professionals participating in the scheme is increasing each week and there are typically over 1,100 successful entry scans every day.

HMCTS is continuing to work with other organisations to onboard more groups onto the scheme and further improve entry to buildings for a wider cohort of professional users.

- solicitors can register for the professional users' access scheme via the [LCCSA](#) and [CLSA](#) websites
- CPS members can apply via the CPS intranet.
- members of the Bar Council can register for the scheme using [the Bar](#)

Manufacturer banned after abusing loan agreements

Daniel Jon Knowles (36), from Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, was a director of HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd. Incorporated in November 2016, the company provided metal products for the construction trade.

When HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd provided products to customers, they would also submit the invoices to an external financing company to secure funds in advance.

The finance company would then recoup the invoice amount they had loaned to HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd from the manufacturer's customers in a process known as 'factoring'.

HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd entered into a Corporate voluntary arrangement in April 2019 before going into administration in January 2020, owing the finance company £510,000 and other creditors a further £1.3 million.

The manufacturer's administration triggered an investigation by the Insolvency Service and enquiries uncovered that from January 2018 to December 2019, Daniel Knowles claimed £510,000 from the finance company.

But instead of providing customers with banking details for the finance company, Daniel Knowles sent invoices to customers with HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd's bank details.

When the finance company tried to collect the outstanding funds from the manufacturer's clients, customers said they had already paid HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd directly.

On 5 January 2021, the Secretary of State accepted an undertaking from Daniel Knowles, disqualifying him from being a company director for 8 years after he did not dispute that he had misused factoring facilities by diverting customer funds away from its invoice finance provider.

The director's ban started on 26 January 2021.

Martin Gitner, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations at the Insolvency Service, said:

Daniel Knowles knew the terms of the agreement with the finance providers and that any customer invoices should contain the payment details of the finance company. Instead, he deliberately inserted

his own company's bank details, knowing it would result in HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd receiving payments that should have been paid to the factoring company.

This lengthy ban shows we take these matters very seriously and will seek to disqualify those who choose to act unscrupulously.

Daniel Jon Knowles is of Bromsgrove and his date of birth is April 1984

HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd (Company Reg no. 10473767)

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: