

# Hong Kong BN(0) visa: UK government to honour historic commitment

The commitment was made following the Chinese government's imposition of the National Security Law in Hong Kong last year, in breach of its commitments under international law.

The visa reflects the UK's historic and moral commitment to the people of Hong Kong who have had their rights and freedoms restricted.

Those with BN(0) status and their eligible family members will be able to come to the UK to live, study and work. As with other visas, after five years in the UK, they will be able to apply for settlement, followed by British citizenship after a further 12 months.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

I am immensely proud that we have brought in this new route for Hong Kong BN(0)s to live, work and make their home in our country.

In doing so we have honoured our profound ties of history and friendship with the people of Hong Kong, and we have stood up for freedom and autonomy – values both the UK and Hong Kong hold dear.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Global Britain will always stand up for what is right and uphold our commitments. This new visa delivers on our promise to the people of Hong Kong, honouring our strong historic relationship and upholding their freedoms.

I look forward to welcoming people wanting to put down roots and build a new life with their family in the UK.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

We have been clear we won't look the other way when it comes to Hong Kong. We will live up to our historic responsibility to its people.

China's imposition of the National Security Law in Hong Kong constitutes a clear and serious breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration contrary to international law.

With the launch of this new visa route, BN(0) citizens will now have a choice to come and live, work and study in the UK.

Applicants for the visa with certain biometric passports will also be able to apply from home using a smartphone app to scan their passport rather than having to visit a visa application centre.

From 23 February, BN(0) status holders and their eligible family members who hold a biometric BN(0), Hong Kong Special Administrative Region or European Economic Area (EEA) passport can scan their passport on the app and complete their application from home. They will be the first non-EEA citizens to be able to do so.

The UK committed to this visa following the imposition of the National Security Law imposed by the Chinese government in June 2020, in a clear breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration. The 1984 declaration is a legally binding treaty which commits to ensure the rights and freedoms of the people of Hong Kong and maintain Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy.

From 15 July 2020 to 13 January 2021, approximately 7,000 BN(0) status holders and their dependants have been granted Leave Outside the Rules at the border. BN(0) status holders will not need to apply for the new route straight away. We have made the decision to extend the Leave Outside the Rules at the border scheme until after the route becomes fully digital.

In addition to the Immigration Health Surcharge, the visa fee payable to stay for five years will be £250 per person or applicants will also be able to apply to stay for 30 months which will cost £180 per person. This is lower than many other visas.

The UK government is working with civil society groups and others to welcome BN(0) status holders to all parts of the UK and help them integrate.

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## [Novavax publishes positive efficacy data for its COVID-19 vaccine](#)

- Novavax publishes phase 3 trial data from UK study showing positive efficacy results for its COVID-19 vaccine
- vaccine shown to be 89.3% effective in preventing coronavirus in participants, as well as efficacy against new UK variant
- UK has secured 60 million doses, with manufacturing set to take place on Teesside

The study was conducted during the period the new COVID-19 variant was first observed in Kent and began to circulate widely, with today's results showing it was effective against the variant during the phase 3 trial.

Thanks to the work of the government's Vaccines Taskforce, the UK has secured 60 million doses of Novavax's vaccine to be delivered in the second half of

this year, if approved for use by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), who will assess whether the vaccine meets robust standards of safety, effectiveness and quality.

Last August Novavax announced plans to manufacture the bulk of the vaccine using FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies's facilities in Billingham, Stockton-on-Tees. This will ensure that, once available, the vaccine can be supplied to the British public as soon as possible.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The results from the UK trial of Novavax's vaccine look extremely promising, and I welcome the news that the company is planning to submit its data to the regulators.

The UK moved quickly to procure 60 million doses from Novavax and I'm pleased to confirm the bulk of the vaccine will be manufactured on Teesside and delivered during this year, if approved for use.

From the scientists and researchers to the thousands of UK trial volunteers, I am enormously grateful to everyone who is playing their part in this truly national effort to defeat this virus once and for all.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said

This is positive news and, if approved by the medicines regulator, the Novavax vaccine will be a significant boost to our vaccination programme and another weapon in our arsenal to beat this awful virus.

I'm proud the UK is at the forefront of another medical breakthrough and I want to thank the brilliant scientists and researchers, as well as the tens of thousands of selfless volunteers who took part in clinical trials.

The NHS stands ready to roll this vaccine out as quickly as possible to those most at risk if it is authorised.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

Having taken part in Novavax's vaccine trial myself, I am particularly thrilled to see such positive results. I want to thank the thousands of trial volunteers, without whom these results would not have been possible.

It will now be for the regulator to do its crucial work in assessing the efficacy and safety of this vaccine, but if approved it will be a further boost to our vaccination programme.

Novavax's candidate differs from those currently being used in the UK, combining an engineered protein from the virus that causes COVID-19 with a plant-based ingredient to help generate a stronger immune response. Having a diverse portfolio of vaccines increases the chances of ensuring there is a vaccine available for everyone across the UK.

The data published today come from more than 15,000 people who were recruited through the National Institute of Health Research vaccine registry, which was launched in July 2020 to support the UK's efforts to deliver vaccines for COVID-19. Nearly 4,000 people in the study were over the age of 65.

Through the Vaccines Taskforce, the UK has secured early access to 367 million doses of 7 of the most promising vaccines so far. To date, the UK government has invested over £230 million into manufacturing a successful vaccine.

The UK was the first country in the world to procure, authorise and then deploy both the Oxford/AstraZeneca and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines.

Production of the Oxford University/AstraZeneca vaccine started last autumn where the bulk of the vaccine for the UK is being made in Oxfordshire and Staffordshire, with filling into vials taking place in North Wales.

In total, more than 7.4 million people across the UK have now had a least one dose of the vaccine.

## Notes to editors

- The government's vaccine supply and scheduled deliveries will fully support our target of offering a first vaccine dose to every person in the top four priority groups by mid-February.
- the members of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) are independent experts who advise the UK on prioritisation at a population level for all vaccination and immunisation programmes; they have developed the prioritisation list of patient groups that is guiding the NHS vaccination programme and the committee keeps its advice under review and updates it as appropriate
- the government has a set process for approving any vaccine, with regulatory oversight provided by the MHRA
- this involves MHRA approving a product licence after the applicant has generated appropriate data to demonstrate the quality, safety and efficacy of the vaccine
- in total, the government has procured 60 million doses of the Novavax candidate, the bulk of which will be manufactured in the UK if the vaccine is approved by regulators
- through the government's Vaccine Taskforce, the UK has secured early access to 367 million doses of 7 of the most promising vaccine candidates, including:
  - BioNTech/Pfizer – Approved – 40 million doses secured
  - Oxford/Astra Zeneca –Approved – 100 million doses secured
  - Moderna – Approved – 17 million doses secured
  - Novavax – Phase III – 60 million doses secured

- Janssen – Phase III – 30 million doses secured
- GSK/Sanofi – Phase I / II – 60 million doses secured
- Valneva – Phase I / II – 60 million doses secured, with an option to acquire a further 130 million if the vaccine is proven to be safe, effective and suitable.
- the UK government has invested £127 million to fund a state-of-the-art manufacturing innovation centre in Braintree, Essex, in collaboration with the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, to accelerate the mass production of a successful Covid-19 vaccine in the UK
- due to open in December 2021, the centre will have the capacity to produce millions of doses of vaccines each month, ensuring the UK has the capabilities to manufacture both vaccines and advanced medicines, including for emerging diseases, far into the future The Government has also provided £4.7 million funding to the Catapult to ensure that the UK has the best skills and expertise in vaccine manufacturing and advanced therapies.
- the government has established a Rapid Deployment Facility with £8.75 million of investment which is manufacturing vaccines at scale.
- the government has also created the UK's first dedicated Vaccine Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (VMIC) and accelerated its development with £93 million of investment
- this investment will rapidly accelerate the construction of the facility, enabling us to bring it online sooner. It will also have expanded capability for advanced vaccine process development, fill and finish and bulk manufacture
- in addition, the facility's capacity will be significantly increased to be able to respond to this pandemic
- once open, it will be able to manufacture 70 million vaccines doses in just 6 months – enough for the UK population
- located in Oxfordshire, the centre will be the UK's first not-for-profit organisation established to develop and advance the mass production of vaccines. This will boost the UK's long-term capacity against future viruses

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## National elections as the path to a stable Libya

- UK underscores “there is no place for foreign fighters and mercenaries in Libya”, and calls for urgent adherence to ceasefire
- UK affirms support for the Libyan decision to hold elections later this year and welcomes progress made in political talks

Mr President, let me start by yet again thanking acting SRSG Stephanie Williams for her leadership of UNSMIL. Stephanie, I want to thank you for your dedication to the Libyan people and to achieving peace. And I want to, through you, thank all of those working in UNSMIL.

And let me also take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of Ján Kubiš as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Libya and Ray Zenenga as UNSMIL Coordinator. We are delighted that they will be bringing their formidable experience and expertise to bear at this critical time for Libya, building on Stephanie's excellent work.

Mr President,

The UK welcomes the progress made by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum in recent weeks with the agreement on a selection mechanism for a new interim executive authority being of particular importance. We urge the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum and all Libyans to make the most of this opportunity to appoint a new unified, inclusive government. I think we all recognise how crucial this period is, and that we must give our full support to UNSMIL, making sure that everything we do clearly contributes to Stephanie's and then Ján's efforts to help Libyans work together towards a new government, and successful national elections on 24 December of this year. Ensuring that the High National Electoral Commission receives the correct support to facilitate these elections should be a priority for the interim executive.

Mr President,

I'd like to underline the importance of the Libyan Joint Military Commission's work on the ceasefire and wider security issues. We support the Commission's 24 January statement reaffirming its commitment to the ceasefire and again calling for the withdrawal of foreign fighters and mercenaries, noting with disappointment that the 23 January deadline passed without any sign of progress. Foreign military interference remains a blight on Libya, and a brake on progress. Let us be clear. There is no place for foreign fighters and mercenaries in Libya, whether those working for the Russian Wagner Group, the thousands of fighters from Syria, or any other external actor infringing Libyan sovereignty, failing to implement the 23 October Ceasefire Agreement, and breaching the United Nations Arms Embargo. It is crucial that all actors, Libyan and international, take all necessary measures to accelerate the implementation of the ceasefire, prioritising the opening of the Coastal Road between Abu Grein and Sirte, and the immediate repatriation of all foreign fighters and mercenaries.

We welcome the Secretary-General's interim report on UN-led ceasefire monitoring and support his proposal rapidly to deploy an advance team to Tripoli, reflecting clear appetite from the Joint Military Commission. We look forward to hearing from the advance team how UNSMIL's mandate might be amended to further support implementation of the 23 October Ceasefire Agreement.

Mr President,

We remain deeply concerned by the economic situation in Libya and noted the Secretary-General's sobering warning in his report that the "Libyan economy is at a precipice". We welcome recent meetings by the Central Bank Board of Governors and the ongoing talks on budget unification. These are important steps to building united, inclusive economic institutions which serve all of

Libya's people. But there is a long way to go and delivering a unified budget needs a unified government. This is urgent work and we welcome UNSMIL's commitment to driving it forward.

Mr President,

The Libyans have taken important steps over the last few weeks and months towards putting in place a new, unified transitional executive. They want to re-establish their sovereignty, to choose their own future through successful, national elections. There are still many steps to go, but the direction in which Libyans want to go is clear. We, the international community, and the United Nations, must do all we can to support them on this path towards peace and security. We must live up to the promises that we made one year ago in the Berlin Conference and that we endorsed as a Council in Resolution 2510.

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## [Ensuring the UN is fit for purpose in 2021 and beyond](#)

Mr President, Secretary General, thank you for joining us today and for outlining your priorities for the year ahead. The UK was honoured to host your first virtual visit of 2021. The visit marked how far the UN has come since those first meetings in London 75 years ago. We hope to welcome you in person soon.

Secretary General, in its 75th anniversary year, the UN faces a pivotal moment. As you said, a transition from *annus horribilis* to a year of hope and opportunity. Your ten challenges are clear. I will comment on three.

On COVID-19, we need to agree a pathway out of this crisis and build a more resilient and responsive pandemic preparedness system for the future. The UK is committed to working with you in your call for the urgent funding needed to ensure COVAX reaches its targets for 2021, and vaccines reach all who need them.

Second, on climate, we have, as you say, to drive up ambition across all climate and environmental issues. As incoming COP26 President, we are committed to working with all partners to secure a balanced, negotiated package that keeps the goals of the Paris Agreement within reach and delivers for the most vulnerable.

Third, both COVID and climate increase the risk of conflict and its humanitarian impacts, which you set out: famine, migration, sexual violence and many more. The UK will use our Security Council Presidency next month to focus on conflict and hunger. We need to be better, as you said, at anticipating crises, and we must acknowledge that humanitarian crises require

political solutions. The UK will continue to be a committed humanitarian donor and calls on others to step up at this time of great need.

In order to achieve our objectives we need to continue your ambitious reform agenda. We need a UN that is inclusive and fit for purpose. The UK is committed to working closely with you and the membership to get us there. Finally, Secretary General, may I thank you for the leadership you have shown during your tenure, particularly this past year. As my Prime Minister has already said, the UK fully supports your decision to run for a second term.

Secretary General, my question is on climate finance. Increasing the quantity and predictability of climate finance is a priority for the UK's COP26 Presidency. We are calling on all donor countries to commit to increased post-2020 finance commitments to achieve and surpass the \$100 billion goal, which is critical for developing countries. But as your recent report made clear, we are some way off meeting the \$100 billion commitment. What steps must the international community take now to ensure we meet this commitment in 2021?

Thank you.

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## **Movement Assistance Scheme: ministerial direction**

Defra Permanent Secretary Tamara Finkelstein has written to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, The Rt Hon George Eustice MP who in return issued a ministerial direction.

The letters relate to the Movement Assistance Scheme.