

End of year stats show milestones reached in making homes safer

- 100% of high-rise social sector buildings have unsafe ACM replaced or work underway
- Around 95% of all high-rise ACM buildings fully remediated or have work on site
- More buildings on site with safety works last year than ever before, despite pandemic
- Ministers renew calls for safety work to be completed as quickly as possible

All high-rise buildings in the social sector and student buildings are now fully remediated or have work underway to remove unsafe ACM cladding, according to stats released today (21 January 2021).

Around 95% of the highest risk buildings with unsafe cladding similar to that found on Grenfell Tower have been made safe or have work underway compared to a year ago; with 159 buildings starting work last year compared to 90 in 2019 – representing more buildings on site with remediation work in 2020 than at any point previously.

However, ministers continue to press building owners to take urgent action to make homes safer.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Today's stats show that – despite the pandemic – significant progress has continued to have been made with remediation work either complete or on site on around 95% of buildings, rising to 100% in all social or student high rise buildings.

This is a big step forwards. While there is still more to do, we are helping make the highest risk buildings with dangerous cladding safer, more quickly.

Building Safety Minister Lord Greenhalgh said:

Building owners are responsible for making sure that their buildings, and the people who live in them, are safe. However, some need to do more and it's unacceptable a minority are yet to start work.

We are in contact with the remaining buildings where remediation has not started and we are clear if work does not take place urgently we will take further enforcement action.

Following the Grenfell Tower fire, the government launched a large-scale programme to identify all high-rise buildings in England with unsafe cladding similar to that found on Grenfell to ensure those homes were prioritised for remediation work to make them safe.

Separately, the government's £1 billion Building Safety Fund is enabling faster remediation of high-rise buildings with other unsafe cladding and as at 15 January had allocated just under £100 million to projects (£95.9 million).

The official statistics published today show data, as of 31 December 2020, updating on progress in remediation of high-rise buildings in England with Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations.

View the [latest data on remediation](#)

The end of the year saw 31 buildings completed between November and December 2020, the highest monthly increase last year.

Of the 45 buildings yet to start, 13 were identified last year; 7 are vacant and do not represent a risk to resident safety.

The department has confirmed that remediation work should continue during the pandemic, where it is safe to do so.

See [guidance relating to construction work and Covid-19](#)

A protection board has been set up with the Home Office and National Fire Chiefs' Council to provide further reassurance to residents of high-risk residential blocks that any risks are identified and acted upon.

The Communities Secretary has made up to £10 million a year of funding available to support the board who will provide expert, tailored building checks and inspections, if necessary, on all high-risk residential buildings in England by 2021.

UK joint statement on progress made by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum

News story

The Governments of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States respond to recent progress made by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum.



A joint statement from the UK, with France, Germany, Italy and the US, in response to recent progress made by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum:

The Governments of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States welcome the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum's (LPDF) vote in favor of the selection mechanism for a new interim executive authority, which will guide Libya toward national elections on December 24, 2021. This is an important step towards Libyan unity. The LPDF's decision affirms the clear demands of the Libyan people that it is time for a change of the status quo. We encourage all Libyan parties to act urgently and in good faith to finalize the adoption through the LPDF of a unified and inclusive government. As participants in the Berlin Conference process and international partners of Libya, we will lend our full support to the LPDF's efforts.

We also welcome the UN Secretary-General's appointment of Ján Kubiš as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Libya, and the appointments of Raisedon Zenenga as the UNSMIL Coordinator and Georgette Gagnon as Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, and we will fully support them in their important roles. We express our ongoing gratitude to the Acting UN Special Representative, Stephanie Williams, for her continuing steadfast leadership of UN mediation until Mr. Kubiš takes up his position.

One year after the Berlin Conference, we underscore the critical role of the international community in support of a political solution in Libya as well as our continued partnership with the Berlin Process members. We remind the Berlin Process members of the solemn commitments we all made at the Summit one year ago, reinforced by UNSCR 2510. In particular, we must continue to support a ceasefire, restore full respect for the UN arms embargo, and end the toxic foreign interference that undermines the aspirations of all Libyans to reestablish their sovereignty and choose their future peacefully through national elections. It is crucial that all Libyan and international actors support steps toward full implementation of the Libyan ceasefire agreement signed on October 23 of last year, including the immediate opening of the coastal road and removal of all foreign fighters and mercenaries.

2/2021: Council Tax information letter – 21 January 2021

This letter sets out the impact on the design of Local Council Tax Support schemes of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021.

This letter also highlights the guidance for creditors recently published by the Insolvency Service ahead of the commencement of the Breathing Space scheme on 4 May 2021.

37th Universal Periodic Review: UK statement on Oman



The United Kingdom recognises Oman's progress on human rights issues since its 2014 review, particularly efforts to combat human trafficking, including through abolition of the 'No Objection Certificate' system. However, we remain concerned that recent amendments to the penal code can limit freedom of expression and association, particularly targeting journalists and activists.

The UK welcomes Oman's accession to the Convention against Torture; and the ICESCR. We urge Oman to implement the substantive provisions of these treaties and submit regular reports on progress.

We recommend Oman:

1. Provide labour law protection for domestic workers and, strengthen anti-trafficking legislation;
2. Ratify and implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
3. Guarantee the right to freedom of expression, assembly and association by amending the Penal Code and other laws such as the Press and Publications Law.

Thank you.

Published 21 January 2021

Conference on Disarmament 2021 **Session: UK statement**

Having already congratulated you on assuming the Presidency, and assured you of my delegation's support, when I took the floor at our meeting on Tuesday morning, let me begin by thanking everyone who has been involved in putting the arrangements in place to allow us to get this 2021 session of the Conference on Disarmament underway. The limitations of this virtual format are clear, and we eagerly look forward to being to resume in-person meetings as soon as the situation allows; but it is very important that we have been able to begin our work on schedule, even in the current exceptionally trying circumstances.

Let me also add my welcome to those new colleagues joining us for the first time today; I look forward to working with them.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's deepest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones and suffered hardships during the Covid-19 pandemic, and our solidarity with all countries that have been affected. The pandemic only serves to underline the importance of the international community working together to resolve global challenges; that goes for this Conference too. Mr President, I would like to take this opportunity briefly to set out the priorities for my delegation for the coming year.

Our focus is clearly on the delayed Tenth Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which we hope can go ahead in August. For fifty years, the NPT has provided the framework for the extension of the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, for the minimisation of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and for significant nuclear disarmament. At the Review Conference, we will celebrate this achievement and reaffirm our commitment to the Treaty in all its aspects.

While the NPT is the indispensable and irreplaceable framework for plotting a course to a world without nuclear weapons, it is this Conference that is charged with negotiating the instruments that will turn that aspiration into reality. Given its membership and its mandate, there is no alternative body that can do that. As such, perhaps the greatest contribution this Conference can make to the success of the Review Conference is to show that it is ready to fulfil that responsibility, notably by commencing negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. My delegation continues to believe that there is no outstanding issue that cannot be resolved during the course of negotiations.

This Conference also has a crucial role to play in preventing an arms race in outer space. The United Kingdom was proud to be the original sponsor of UN General Assembly resolution 75/36, entitled 'Reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours', and we were gratified and encouraged by the very broad support for it shown by Member States. That resolution mandates the UN Secretary-General to produce a substantive report on the question as a basis for further discussions, and we encourage all members and observers of this Conference to contribute to it. The resolution also invites members and observers of this Conference to inform it of their national space security policies, strategies or doctrines, on a voluntary basis, in accordance with and in support of its mandate. We look forward to having the opportunity to do so during this session.

More broadly, Mr President, my Government will soon publish the results of its Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, which will define the long-term aims for our national security and foreign policy. We undertake to brief the Conference on the aspects of the Integrated Review that pertain to the UK's nuclear weapons policy and to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control more generally once it is published.

Mr President, We warmly welcome the proposal you circulated already in December on behalf of the six Presidencies of this session for a package pertaining to a Programme of Work for 2021. My delegation has consistently supported the creation of Subsidiary Bodies to work towards negotiating

mandates on the core issues, and consultations on issues related to the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. We also continue to support the proposal of the delegation of Australia to render the language of the Rules of Procedure gender-neutral. This is a specific, technical measure which has no bearing on wider questions of the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, and which should therefore face no impediment to swift adoption.

The events of Tuesday morning leave us under no illusions, however, that it will be easy to reach consensus even on issues which should be technical and procedural. I made my delegation's position on the blocking of applications for observer status by Iran and Turkey clear then, and do not intend to repeat it now. I would simply express the hope that our actions for the rest of this session, beginning with the swift adoption of a Programme of Work on the basis of your proposed package, can serve to rebuild the credibility of this crucial body, recognising the importance of the problems before us and the vital interest of all states in our success.

As we mark the 75th anniversary of the first meetings of the United Nations in London this month, I would like to finish by remembering the words of a man who was present at the creation, and went on to become a legendary UN official – Sir Brian Urquhart, who sadly passed away a few weeks ago at the age of 101. He once said of the UN, “three-fourths of the time, you achieve nothing, but every once in a while, it works just enough to make it worthwhile. From day to day, one thinks it hopeless, but cumulatively, it does work”. Let us use our time this year wisely, work tirelessly, respectfully and creatively to bridge the differences that persist among us, and make our Conference work just enough to be worthwhile.