

UK statement on Israeli settlements, January 2021

News story

The UK government has set out its position on the Government of Israel's decision to approve new settlements in the West Bank.



A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:

The UK is seriously concerned by the Government of Israel's decision to approve the construction of 780 new settlement units across the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including areas deep within the West Bank which could threaten future peace negotiations.

Settlements are illegal under international law and risk undermining the physical viability of the two state solution. We call for the construction of these in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank to cease immediately.

Published 18 January 2021

37th Universal Periodic Review: UK statement on Micronesia

Thank you, Madam President,

The United Kingdom appreciates the Federated States of Micronesia's continued

participation in the UPR process. We commend [the Federated States of] Micronesia's efforts to implement the recommendations from its last review, despite capacity and resource constraints, and we welcome the ongoing consultation with civil society in this process.

The United Kingdom commends [the Federated States of] Micronesia on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We further welcome the Government's preparation of a report into the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and encourage further action in this regard.

The United Kingdom acknowledges the challenges facing [the Federated States of] Micronesia in their efforts to address their human rights obligations, especially in the face of the growing impact of climate change, and we encourage the Government to draw on available international technical assistance and expertise in this area.

We recommend the Federated States of Micronesia;

Thank you, Madam President.

Satellite-powered app to spot loneliness in hotspots in UK cities

The satellite-enabled Care View application tackles social isolation and loneliness in urban areas by enlisting the help of an army of professional volunteers across a city, including police officers, postal workers and charity workers, who register on the app when they see signs people may be experiencing social isolation. The app provides a digital tool to help volunteers find people in need of help.

Today's announcement comes on what is known as Blue Monday (18 January), said to be the most depressing day of the year with post-Christmas blues and dark cold nights.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

The social restrictions necessitated to tackle coronavirus, while essential, have brought into sharp focus just how much we all rely on face-to-face interaction in our everyday lives.

Addressing loneliness in our communities is an issue that is particularly close to my heart and this pioneering satellite-enabled app will tap in to the goodwill of our heroic frontline workers and volunteers so that they can identify and help those

most in need of support through the pandemic and for years to come.

People out in a community can tap the app when they spot signs that a householder may be struggling, like rubbish dumped in the garden or curtains that always remain shut. Through satellite technology, this 'App Tap' generates a heat spot on a web-based map of the city, and if there are multiple 'App Taps', this creates heat-maps pinpointing streets and homes where people might welcome assistance of some kind.

The heat map – generated by the GNSS data – shows where volunteers can best focus their outreach efforts, with homes then leafleted and visited to create referrals into the NHS social care process. By helping people reach services like counselling or housing support, the app increases the likelihood of finding people in urgent need and helps prevent many people's issues from becoming more acute. Joining people up with support services at an early stage helps to avert the need for more costly interventions.

Experts are worried about rising numbers of people across the UK experiencing loneliness, particularly among young people and older adults. According to figures published by the Office for National Statistics, around 6% of adults in England are always or often lonely.

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

Many of us have learned this year that pandemics can be lonely times, and that we all benefit from some amount of companionship.

This application channels the power of space to help locate and give a helping hand to people in need of help. It may rely on satellite data, but its real power comes from the altruism of its users.

Social support is incredibly important in times of stress, and I am delighted that this application we have backed is going to help lift people out of solitude and isolation.

Care View, which runs on almost all types of smartphone, was developed by the Urban Sustainable Development Lab and has been used by Public Health teams, charities and Fire and Rescue Services to discover and support vulnerable people.

The application helps join up healthcare provision – something that every Council is trying to achieve – by supporting collaboration between charities, the Council and emergency services.

Abhay Adhikari, founder of the Urban Sustainable Development Lab, said:

During the pandemic, the opportunity to work with teams from West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester has been a humbling experience.

Everything we've learned so far will help us ensure that Care View continues to play a role in helping cities support socially isolated communities in the coming months and post-COVID recovery.

Jon Hindley, Public Health Localities and Primary Care Team at Leeds City Council, said:

Care View has allowed us a window into the sometimes lonely and isolated world of vulnerable citizens within our poorest neighbourhoods. This has been the catalyst to help people we wouldn't have otherwise known about to reconnect with their communities, improve their health and keep it that way.

The UK Space Agency funding has allowed senior commissioning managers at the council to recognise Care View's importance and consequently incorporate Care View into council-commissioned outreach services currently under review such as Better Together.

The new technology that has been added will enhance the effectiveness and drive the dynamics of our community health outreach teams more than ever before. This dynamism and technological functionality can play a vital part on the road to recovery and resilience for our local Leeds residents in a post pandemic world.

The app does not require additional storage space on a smartphone, and its potential for social good has been recognised by Nesta and The Observer, who named it one of the UK's most radical social innovation projects.

In 2017, the government appointed the first Minister for Loneliness, Tracey Crouch, and in December announced an extra £7.5 million funding package to help tackle loneliness over the winter period.

[Global Trading Europe Ltd placed into provisional liquidation](#)

Global Trading Europe Ltd has been placed into provisional liquidation following a hearing at the High Court in Manchester on 8 January 2021 after application by the Insolvency Service on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The Official Receiver has been appointed as the provisional liquidator and has responsibilities to protect the company's assets pending the outcome of a petition to wind up the company in the public interest.

As provisional liquidator the Official Receiver will:

- take control of the company from those currently responsible
- take steps to protect the company's assets
- provide a point of contact for those who have had dealings with the company

The provisional liquidator also has the power to investigate the affairs of the company to protect assets including any third party, or trust monies, or assets in the possession of, or under the control of the company.

The case is now subject to High Court action and no further information will be made available until the petition is heard on 16 March 2021.

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 2 Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, London Road, Manchester, M1 3BN, or via PIU.North@insolvency.gov.uk.

Global Trading Europe Ltd – company registration number 10983973 – was incorporated on 27 September 2017. The company's registered office is at Unit 3 Car Wash Part, Upchurch House, Abbey Gate, Leicester, LE4 0AA

The petition was presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986. The Official Receiver was appointed as provisional liquidator of the company on 8 January 2021 by HHJ Cawson QC, a Judge of the High Court.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). [Further information about live company investigations is available here.](#)

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

Billions of pounds of support helps businesses up and down the country

More than 1.4 billion loans have supported businesses and protected jobs across all sectors. The figures show that the retail and construction sectors have benefitted the most, demonstrating how government support is helping those impacted hardest by the pandemic.

Support has been spread across the country, with regions receiving loans proportionately to the amount of businesses located there. This shows that government support is helping those who need it. These loans are in addition

to furlough, the self-employment income support scheme and business grants, as part of the government's unprecedented £280 billion support package to protect jobs during the pandemic.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

Throughout this crisis, we have provided more than £280 billion of support to protect jobs and livelihoods up and down the country.

We are committed to continuing to ensure jobs are protected and opportunity is created.

Companies right across the UK have benefitted from support through government-backed loans, including Preston cheesemaker, Mrs Kirkham's Lancashire Cheese, who took out a CBILS loan to support their firm.

Graham Kirkham, director of Mrs Kirkham's Lancashire Cheese, said:

Once I found out our loan had been approved, the relief was immense. The funding, combined with the help and publicity we received, has really helped us to get through the past few weeks. We were able to join a box scheme run by Neal's Yard in collaboration with Jamie Oliver that allowed cheese producers like us to supply customers directly.

Without the money, it's highly likely we wouldn't have been able to continue and our three-generation family business would've ceased to exist, through no fault of our own.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

These figures show very clearly that we have delivered on the solemn promise we made to support businesses across every part of the UK.

While there are still tough times ahead, we will continue to offer all the support we can to protect jobs and keep businesses afloat so we can look to not only restart our economy, but build back better from the pandemic.

At the start of winter, the Chancellor announced that more than a million businesses who took out a Bounce Back Loan will now receive further protection from the Covid crisis through flexible repayments, under the new Pay as You Grow system, which gives businesses more time to repay. Since then, the government has extended the loans schemes until March, and given businesses the ability to 'top-up' their loans if they need to.

The government has invested more than £280 billion throughout the pandemic to

protect millions of jobs and businesses, including extending the self-employed and furlough schemes through to April to give businesses the certainty they need to plan over the coming months. This includes the £4.6 billion the Chancellor announced last week in one-off top up grants for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses worth up to £9,000 per property to help businesses through to the spring.

Further information

CBILS

Region	Value of loan offered (£)	Number of loans offered
East Midlands	1,297,778,540	5,273
East of England	1,766,950,464	7,460
London	3,847,934,021	12,495
North East	493,314,081	1,994
North West	1,959,152,472	7,563
Northern Ireland	496,806,683	1,501
Scotland	982,517,603	4,144
South East	2,824,103,231	11,260
South West	1,534,026,632	6,416
Wales	503,355,434	2,228
West Midlands	1,486,023,928	6,077
Yorkshire and The Humber	1,260,361,190	5,415
Unspecified	67,328,939	190

Bounce Back Loans

Region	Value of Loans Offered (£)	Number of Loans Offered
East Midlands	2,684,725,529	91,348
East of England	4,192,234,249	137,741
London	9,946,815,769	295,692
North East	1,249,741,795	44,858
North West	4,512,329,695	152,188
Northern Ireland	1,172,538,374	38,181
Scotland	2,496,404,756	86,062
South East	6,018,627,864	199,574
South West	3,275,798,746	116,063
Wales	1,524,813,850	55,094
West Midlands	3,520,737,158	114,715
Yorkshire and The Humber	2,986,264,487	101,197
Unspecified	62,547,705	2,017