

PM reiterates commitment to Overseas Territories

Press release

The Prime Minister has addressed leaders of the Overseas Territories.



The Prime Minister addressed leaders of the Overseas Territories this afternoon as part of the UK-Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council (JMC).

He set out the UK's unwavering commitment to supporting the Overseas Territories as they deal with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Prime Minister also reiterated the UK's intention to strengthen ties with the Overseas Territories as the Transition Period ends, and build a new relationship with our European friends and partners.

Recalling his visits to Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands in 2017 following Hurricane Irma, the Prime Minister affirmed that the UK will always stand by the Overseas Territories in any crisis they face.

Addressing the JMC, the Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Do not forget that the UK is absolutely committed to you, to your futures and to our partnership.

As we go forward and recover from this pandemic, we want to make sure that we build back greener and that we look after island economies that are so vulnerable to climate change.

In spite of everything, of the difficulties we are going through, we remember that we are united by deep ties of kinship and friendship and history and values. We in the UK government are going to make sure we continue to intensify that partnership.

The Joint Ministerial Council is being held over two days and will conclude on Thursday 26 November.

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[PM call with Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia: 24 November 2020](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia.



The Prime Minister spoke to the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman today.

He congratulated Saudi Arabia on hosting a successful virtual G20 Leaders' Summit last weekend, with productive meetings on the global recovery from the pandemic and tackling climate change.

They discussed recent positive progress on the vaccine being developed by the University of Oxford and AstraZeneca and the importance of ensuring global access to coronavirus vaccines.

The Prime Minister noted Saudi Arabia's economic and social progress under its Vision 2030 strategy, and they addressed the issue of women's rights and further developments needed in that area.

He extended an invite to attend the COP26 Summit in Glasgow next year, and they spoke about the huge potential for green technology and ambitious climate action in Saudi Arabia.

They closed by agreeing to explore new opportunities for cooperation in trade, culture and defence, building on the existing strong partnership

between our two countries.

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UK-wide Christmas arrangements agreed by the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations

The UK Government and the Devolved Administrations have today agreed on joint arrangements for an easing of social restrictions that will allow friends and loved ones to reunite over the Christmas period.

All four parts of the UK have signed off an aligned approach allowing up to three households to form a 'Christmas bubble' from December 23 to 27.

Individuals will also be able to travel between tiers and across the whole of the UK without restriction within the five-day period, for the purposes of meeting with their bubble. Those travelling to and from Northern Ireland will be permitted to travel an additional day either side.

The approach was agreed by Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, and the First Ministers of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and the deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland during a COBR meeting he chaired this afternoon.

Speaking following the meeting, Mr Gove said:

The UK-wide agreement reached today will offer hope for families and friends who have made many sacrifices over this difficult year.

We know that the Christmas period this year will not be normal, but following constructive discussions between the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, families and friends will now have the option to meet up in a limited and cautious way across the UK should they wish.

In coming to this agreement, we have listened to scientific and clinical advice on how best to minimise the risk and reach a balanced and workable set of rules that we hope will allow people to spend time together at this important time of year.

Each administration will clarify their own rules on support bubbles and extended households in due course. In England, support bubbles will continue

to be counted as one household.

Christmas bubbles will be able to gather in private homes, attend places of worship together and meet in outdoor public places. Beyond this, people should continue to follow all other local restrictions in the area. Guidance is being published on Gov.uk.

As part of the agreement, each administration will be reminding households that they should remain alert to the risks still posed by the virus and consider how, where possible, they can celebrate and support more isolated friends and loved ones through alternative approaches such as video calls and meeting outdoors.

When following these new rules, people are reminded to continue to take personal responsibility to limit the spread of the virus and protect loved ones, particularly if they are vulnerable. Forming a bubble for those who are vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable carries additional risks.

The four parts of the UK will work together to communicate these new measures across the country and ensure that communities are aware of any variations in approaches.

Details of the new measures can be found in the [joint statement](#), agreed today.

[Joint statement on UK-wide Christmas arrangements from the UK Government and Devolved Administrations](#)

Press release

A joint statement on UK-wide Christmas arrangements from the UK Government and Devolved Administrations.



As 2020 draws to a close, we recognise it has been an incredibly difficult year for us all. We have all had to make significant sacrifices in our everyday lives, and many religious and community groups have already had to change or forgo their customary celebrations to slow the spread of coronavirus and save lives.

This cannot be a 'normal' Christmas. But as we approach the festive period, we have been working closely together to find a way for family and friends to see each other, even if it is for a short time, and recognising that it must be both limited and cautious.

Even where it is within the rules, meeting with friends and family over Christmas will be a personal judgement for individuals to take, mindful of the risks to themselves and others, particularly those who are vulnerable. We need everyone to think carefully about what they do during this period, balancing some increased social contact with the need to keep the risk of increased transmission of the virus as low as possible. This is particularly important when considering those who are vulnerable, and before deciding to come together over the festive period we urge the consideration of alternative approaches such as the use of technology or meeting outside.

In this context, the four administrations have reached agreement on a single set of UK-wide measures to help people come together with their loved ones in a way that is as safe as possible.

Today we have agreed that:

- Travel restrictions across the four administrations and between tiers will be lifted to provide a window for households to come together between the 23rd and 27th of December.
- Up to three households can form an exclusive 'bubble' to meet at home during this period. When a bubble is formed it is fixed, and must not be changed or extended further at any point.
- Each Christmas bubble can meet at home, at a place of worship or an outdoor public place, but existing, more restrictive rules on hospitality and meeting in other venues will be maintained throughout this period.

It is important that everyone respects and abides by the rules of each nation wherever they choose to spend the festive period. Where there are any variations in our approach, these will be communicated by each administration accordingly. Further [guidance](#) will be provided in due course.

The winter holiday period is a time often spent with family and friends, with schools and offices closing and people travelling over the bank holidays. Many have already begun making their plans, and we are today providing clarity to help people make the right choices for them, and enjoy time with those closest to them while staying within the rules to protect us all.

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Attorney General speech at the London Panel Induction Event

Checked against delivery.

The role of the Attorney General is one which I hold with great pride. It is one of the most interesting posts a lawyer can hold, and it comes with a varied and deeply interesting range of responsibilities.

As the Attorney General, I act simultaneously as the chief legal adviser to the Government, the superintending minister of the Government Legal Department, and the guardian of the public interest in our constitutional democracy. This means that I work closely with the Bar, with its well-earned reputation for legal and professional excellence; and together with our renowned judiciary, which is rightly admired around the world for its impartiality and independence, its intellectual rigour and its essential importance to the rule of law.

An aspect of my role which I am very passionate about is appointing and maintaining the Panel Counsel system.

That is why I am delighted to be here today at this induction event to congratulate and welcome panel members who were successful in the London Panel competition this year.

To appear as an advocate on behalf of the Crown is a great privilege. I was a member of the then Attorney General's C panel from 2010-2015. I found the work hugely rewarding then, and incredibly varied and in my role as Attorney General I continue to see the value in having counsel of the highest quality representing Her Majesty's Government in front of the judiciary. It is vital that we have able advocates to represent the Government to the best of their ability.

It is a great achievement to have been successful in this competition. Appointment is, as you know, on the basis of merit through fair, open and rigorous competition. This year 105 applicants were successful out of 267 applications.

I believe that in casting the net as widely as possible and encouraging applications from the widest possible range of those who are eligible to apply, we are able to catch the best new panel members. I am proud of the work done in recent years by myself, the Solicitor General and previous Law Officers to increase the number of Chambers who have members on the panels. Membership is certainly not limited to a few privileged sets, we now have 405 London A, B and C panel members from 82 Chambers.

Being a panel member can give advocates the opportunity to work on some of

the most important and high profile cases of the day, and the panel system means that whether junior counsel are acting for the Government in relation to an inquiry such as Grenfell, a judicial review against a planning decision, a claim for defective construction of a motorway, an injunction against a newspaper, or any indeed other aspect of contentious and non-contentious legal work for which advocates are needed, the Government can be reassured the highest quality advocates appear before the judiciary on its behalf.

It may come as no surprise that membership of the panels, and progressing through the levels from C Panel, to B Panel and then on to A Panel, offers exposure to cases of great public interest and legal complexity. The progression does not stop at A panel. This year 12 QCs were appointed from the panel. I am confident this uniquely interesting work and opportunity for progression is what attracted many of you to apply for the prestigious positions you now occupy.

I regret I cannot stay for the rest of the induction. You are now going to be hearing from some great colleagues of mine, including First Treasury Counsel, Sir James Eadie.

I would again like to offer my sincere congratulations to you all. I look forward to seeing your careers progress as you undertake the wide variety of complex and exciting work available as a panellist.