

Joint Statement on Hong Kong – November 2020

Press release

Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, and the United States Secretary of State issue a joint statement on the situation in Hong Kong.



We the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, and the United States Secretary of State, reiterate our serious concern regarding China's imposition of new rules to disqualify elected legislators in Hong Kong. Following the imposition of the National Security Law and postponement of September's Legislative Council elections, this decision further undermines Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and rights and freedoms.

China's action is a clear breach of its international obligations under the legally binding, UN-registered Sino-British Joint Declaration. It breaches both China's commitment that Hong Kong will enjoy a 'high degree of autonomy', and the right to freedom of speech.

The disqualification rules appear part of a concerted campaign to silence all critical voices following the postponement of September's Legislative Council elections, the imposition of charges against a number of elected legislators, and actions to undermine the freedom of Hong Kong's vibrant media.

We call on China to stop undermining the rights of the people of Hong Kong to elect their representatives in keeping with the Joint Declaration and Basic Law. For the sake of Hong Kong's stability and prosperity, it is essential that China and the Hong Kong authorities respect the channels for the people of Hong Kong to express their legitimate concerns and opinions.

As a leading member of the international community, we expect China to live up to its international commitments and its duty to the people of Hong Kong. We urge the Chinese central authorities to reconsider their actions against Hong Kong's elected legislature and immediately reinstate the Legislative Council members.

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Putting the needs and security of Israelis and Palestinians first

Thank you very much, Madam President, and thank you to Special Coordinator Mladenov for his briefing.

Madam President, as others have done, I would like to start by reflecting on the tragic passing of Saeb Erekat. I echo the words of my Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary in offering our condolences to the family of Saeb Erekat, to President Abbas, and to the Palestinian people. Dr Erekat dedicated his life to dialogue, to Palestinian rights, and to advancing the cause of peace. He will be sorely missed.

It is with Dr Erekat's legacy in mind that we must renew our commitment to acting through dialogue, to building trust and cooperation, and to avoiding the unilateral and inflammatory steps that undermine the cause of peace.

Madam President, as we made clear repeatedly in this Council, the United Kingdom opposed annexation and welcomed its suspension. Other unilateral action which jeopardises the physical viability of a future Palestinian state is also unacceptable. The United Kingdom condemns the Government of Israel's publication of tenders for construction in the East Jerusalem settlement of Givat Hamatos, an extremely sensitive area of the West Bank. Settlements are illegal under international law, and remain an obstacle to peace and a threat to the two-state solution.

The United Kingdom also expresses our serious concern following the demolition of Humsa Al-Baqai'a by the Israeli Authorities on 3 November. This act caused the displacement of vulnerable Palestinians, including 41 children, and it caused unnecessary suffering. 2020 has seen the highest levels of demolitions of Palestinian homes and structures since 2016. The United Kingdom calls on the Government of Israel to cease this policy, and provide Palestinians with a clear, transparent route to construction in Area C of the West Bank. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, Madam President, demolitions are a violation of International Humanitarian Law.

Madam President, the United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the situation in Gaza, particularly at this time of global pandemic. We continue to urge the parties to prioritise progress towards reaching a durable solution for Gaza and to take the necessary practical steps to ensure Gaza's reconstruction and economic recovery. We encourage actors to put forward long-term, sustainable proposals to resolve the threat posed to Israel's security by Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other militants in Gaza. We call upon Hamas and other terrorist groups to permanently end their incitement and rocket fire against Israel.

We note the Commissioner General's urgent call for additional funding for UNRWA this month, without which schools will close from the beginning of December. We call in particular on states which have cut their funding significantly in recent years to support UNRWA now. And I note that this year the United Kingdom has given over \$65 million, and that is commensurate with previous years as well. We are sympathetic to those who argue that UNRWA must do more to reach a secure and sustainable financial footing; but this cannot be achieved by 1 December, and money is needed by then to avoid unnecessarily adding to the refugees' suffering.

This week, Madam President, we have seen the historic first Ministerial visit of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Israel. Normalisation agreements show that the Arab world and Israel can pursue a positive path, away from hostility, and towards a more peaceful, prosperous region.

With dialogue in mind, my government therefore welcomes reports that the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel will return to cooperation and abide by signed agreements. Full cooperation, across financial, security and health matters, puts the needs and security of Israelis and Palestinians first. This is an example of the dialogue and compromise that we have called for, and that will be required to make meaningful progress towards a two-state solution. Both parties should now seize this positive momentum, and show commitment to their bilateral agreements through their actions on the ground.

73 years ago this month, the United Nations decided on the partition of Palestine. Piece by painful piece, over many years, progress was made towards an agreed partition – a two-state solution. As the region takes strides towards dialogue, it is time, too, for the parties to the Israel-Palestine conflict to stop dismantling peace, and start building it again.

Thank you, Madam President.

Apoyo extra del Reino Unido frente a

huracanes en Centroamérica

Press release

El Reino Unido proporciona un kit de suministros básicos para desastres, que incluye refugio temporal, alimentos y saneamiento, además de 1 millón de libras para la Cruz Roja.



- El Reino Unido proporciona un kit de suministros básicos para desastres, que incluye refugio temporal, alimentos y saneamiento, además de 1 millón de libras para la Cruz Roja
- El buque Angus de la Real Flota Auxiliar llega a las costas de Honduras para ayudar en las tareas de auxilio
- La costa del Caribe es golpeada por un segundo huracán, provocando que millones de personas requieran ayuda urgente

El Reino Unido está proporcionando de forma urgente suministros humanitarios esenciales y 1 millón de libras al llamado de emergencia de la Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja (IFRC) para ayudar a las personas en Centroamérica que han sido golpeadas por los catastróficos huracanes recientes.

Los países de América Central han sido azotados por el Huracán Iota, pocos días después de que el Huracán Eta impactara el mismo tramo de costa, causando graves daños e inundaciones. Las comunidades vulnerables en Nicaragua, Honduras y Guatemala, así como partes de Belice, El Salvador, México, Costa Rica, Colombia y Panamá se han visto afectadas, y se cuenta con informes que indican que más de 5 millones de personas se han visto afectadas en toda la región. Se informa también que más de 160 personas han muerto y mucha más gente en toda la región se ha visto obligada a evacuar sus hogares.

El Reino Unido provee:

- 1 millón de libras para el llamado de emergencia de la Federación Internacional, que proporcionará refugio, sustento, servicios de salud y agua potable, así como productos de saneamiento e higiene;
- 2,000 lonas impermeables; 1,000 cajas de herramientas para ayudar a proporcionar refugio de emergencia, 1,000 equipos para cocinar y 900 kits de limpieza para los más necesitados, que distribuirá la Cruz Roja;

- Apoyo a organizaciones de beneficencia que trabajan en la región a través del Fondo START;
- Ayuda mediante el despliegue del buque Angus de la Real Flota Auxiliar, que está apoyando los esfuerzos de auxilio militar de Estados Unidos en Honduras.

La Ministra para Europa y las Américas del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Mancomunidad y Desarrollo (FCDO), Wendy Morton, dijo:

El impacto de estos huracanes ha sido devastador, especialmente porque la misma región ha sido golpeada dos veces en cuestión de semanas. Nuestros pensamientos están con aquellos que han perdido a sus seres queridos y sus hogares.

El Reino Unido está incrementando su apoyo para ayudar a los necesitados a través de nuestra asistencia humanitaria y militar, proporcionando refugio, agua potable y medicamentos que salvan vidas a las personas que se encuentran esperando ayuda.

Notas para editores:

Este apoyo es parte de la asistencia del Reino Unido confirmada el viernes 13 de noviembre. [Lee mas aquí.](#)

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[Defence Secretary's speech at the Defence Space Conference 2020](#)

Good afternoon, it's a great pleasure to speak to you at the end of what has clearly been a fascinating and wide-ranging conference.

The variety of speakers – over 45, from the UK and overseas, and military and civilian sectors, as well as academia and private industry – shows just how important space is, right across today's society.

Such importance risks dependence and vulnerability, but it also creates opportunity and offers advantages.

That is why the Prime Minister has such a clear vision for the UK as a Great Science power, with credibility and ambition in Space at its heart. #F This conference has demonstrated how defence will play a central part in achieving that vision.

We've heard from the Chief of the Air Staff about modern society's dependence on space services.

And we have been reminded how our adversaries are increasingly seeking to weaponise space.

In recent years more countries have used Anti-Satellite weapons.

Earlier this year, alongside the US Chief of Space Operations, I called out Russia's aggression in orbit.

But space weapons are not our only concern. Ground-based lasers and jammers could also pose a significant threat to our satellites. And their supporting infrastructure on the ground also remains a serious target.

No wonder one of the constant refrains you have heard throughout this conference and, indeed, throughout this year of Covid, has been the importance of resilience.

Commander UK Strategic Command set out how we must become more resilient in space if we are to establish the 'digital backbone' and achieve Multi Domain Integration.

And we have now recognised space as an operational domain, driving the development of capabilities to increase resilience and competitiveness.

We are, of course, not the only ones and you've heard from many of our Allies in the US, France and NATO, are also alongside us, and they are going to be part of that journey as well.

But there are those steps through which I want the UK MOD to now lead on this journey:

First, our ability to mobilise.

We must recognise our vulnerabilities. Understand our reliance on space – whether for imagery, communications, or navigation. And, in the event that we lose access to our satellite services, have a contingency plan ready.

So, we're working very closely with the UK Space Agency to create a National Space Operations Capability.

It will improve the way we share data.

It will help us act unhindered to secure our national interests in space.

And, alongside our UK Space Command, it will enhance defence's ability to generate and operate its own equipment.

Second, resilience will be about modernising what we have – strengthening our existing capabilities.

That's why we are bringing SKYNET into defence ownership. It will give our personnel the tools to operate a world-leading satellite constellation and

ensure they stay at the cutting-edge of space experience and expertise.

And that's why, back in July, we awarded a contract worth £500-million for SKYNET 6A. This new, more advanced satellite capability will provide continued communications support to the UK's deployed forces for many years.

Meanwhile, we're continuing the hunt for the latest space innovations.

I am delighted that our first ever International Space Pitch Day was so successful, and congratulations to the winning bids.

With innovations from space weather to space domain awareness, I wish these ten companies every success as they move forward with defence contracts.

Finally, resilience will be about transforming for the future. Going further and faster. Developing next-generation and generation-after-next, technology and the people and structures to exploit them.

That's why we've created the Defence Space Enterprise Portfolio.

Bonding brilliant industry expertise with MOD's Space Directorate and our world leading DSTL.

Transforming the latest research into game changing space innovations.

Not only deterring dangers but fast-tracking innovative kit to bring to the frontline of space.

Because resilience may be our watchword. But it goes hand in hand with opportunity.

Our evolving National Space Strategy will help us deliver those grand ambitions and defence will play its part – mobilising, modernising, and transforming.

So exciting times lie ahead. Last year we celebrated 50 years since the UK's first venture into Space.

Since then the dynamism of you – our great British scientists, military and industrial experts – has not wavered.

And your continuing commitment will ensure that in the coming decade Global Britain takes its place as a Space Power in the new Space Age.

Extra UK support to Central American

hurricane response

Press release

The UK is providing vital humanitarian supplies and £1 million to the IFRC emergency appeal to help people in Central America hit by the recent hurricanes.



- The UK is providing vital disaster recovery kit – including shelter, cooking and sanitation kits – and £1 million to Red Cross appeal
- Royal Fleet Auxiliary Argus ship arrives off the coast of Honduras to aid relief efforts
- Caribbean coast is battered by second hurricane, leaving millions in need of urgent help

The UK is urgently providing vital humanitarian supplies and £1 million to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) emergency appeal to help people in Central America who have been hit by the recent disastrous hurricanes.

Countries across Central America have been battered by Hurricane Iota, just days after Hurricane Eta hit the same stretch of coast, causing serious damage and flooding. Vulnerable communities in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala as well as parts of Belize, El Salvador, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Panama have been hit, with reports indicating that over 5 million people have been affected across the region. Over 160 are reported to have died, with many more people across the region being forced to evacuate their homes.

The UK is providing:

- £1 million to the IFRC emergency appeal, which will provide shelter; livelihoods; healthcare; clean water, sanitation and hygiene products;
- 2,000 tarpaulins; 1,000 tool kits to help provide emergency shelter; 1,000 cooking sets, and 900 cleaning kits for those desperately in need, to be distributed by the Red Cross;
- Support to charities working in the region via the START Fund;
- Help through deploying Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship Argus, which is assisting US military relief efforts in Honduras.

Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas, Wendy Morton, said:

The impact of these hurricanes has been devastating, especially as the same region has been hit twice in a matter of weeks. Our thoughts are with those who have lost their loved ones and their homes.

The UK is increasing support to help those in need, through both our humanitarian and military assistance, providing life-saving shelter, clean water and medicine to people in desperate need.

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