

# COP26 President, Alok Sharma's Speech at COP27 Breakthrough Agenda: One Year On event

Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning and welcome to the UK Pavilion and decarbonisation day.

We are half way through COP and obviously I can see the experienced folk who are able to get here at 8am in the morning, others are flagging but thank you for coming to this important event.

Can I also say that today marks Armistice Day and the UK Pavilion will be marking a 2 minute silence at 1pm. You're all welcome but if you are coming please try and get there 5 minutes before 1pm.

Ministers, colleagues, friends. Good morning to you, firstly a big thank you to everyone who helped get us to this point when it comes to the Breakthrough Agendas.

And, you have been incredibly supportive over the three years of the UK's Presidency and I know that you will do the same for our friends in Egypt as well, both at this COP but also in their presidency year as well.

So we are marking a one-year launch anniversary of the Breakthrough Agenda in Glasgow.

And, just a reflection on decarbonisation. We're all doing our bit domestically in our countries and when I was Business and Energy Secretary in our Government, we launched the 10 point plan for a green industrial revolution looking at a whole range of sectors where we needed to decarbonise rapidly.

We launched our energy white paper so there is a lot of work that certainly the UK has done and each of you have done domestically as well in your countries.

The aim of the Breakthrough Agenda was actually to bring countries together to collaborate and make sure that we decarbonise the most critical sectors: Road Transport, Power, Agriculture, Hydrogen and Steel.

And I was really pleased to say that we had 45 governments coming together and they account for around 75 percent of global GDP, so a real heft behind this Breakthrough Agenda work.

And the aim of it of course is to deploy innovative and sustainable decarbonisation solutions, and very importantly to make them accessible and affordable for everyone.

And for people like Stephen Guilbeault, my friend Grant Shapps, ministers who

talk to their counterparts around the world will know that one of the big asks of many developing nations is technology at affordable levels as well as finance.

This is an agenda that will help us get there and we have made really good progress over the last year

If you have a look at Zero Emission Vehicles.

There has been a 95 percent increase in global sales, with 1.5 million sold in the first quarter of this year.

And the pace of that is accelerating, same thing with renewables with a big increase this year.

And if you have a look at what the IEA has said, their analysis shows that of all the newly installed energy capacity across the world in 2021, 90% of that was renewables and they expect the same thing in 2022 and 2023 as well.

So I am really pleased that we are making progress across some of these agendas.

I want to welcome Cambodia and Austria, who have recently endorsed the Breakthrough Agenda.

I also want to thank our friends in Germany, Cambodia, Australia and Ireland for endorsing the Agriculture Breakthrough.

And thank you to our friends in France, who have expanded our scope and they have the intent now to launch a Buildings Breakthrough, which as you know in the UK 25% of emissions come from buildings, they're going to do that in collaboration with our friends from Morocco.

And of course thank you also to Canada, Steven who stated their intent to launch a Cement Breakthrough as well.

But the reality is we know that as with all the commitments we got in Glasgow, that none of this will count for anything unless we actually follow through and we implement so I hope that is something that we will be doing together.

Now one of the other things that people have said to me during this year is that you launched lots of initiatives in Glasgow but what happens when your presidency ends and it has ended.

And what we have tried to do is to house many of these in different forums so that the work can continue

So I can tell you that Mission Innovation and the Clean Energy Ministerial is going to take on the joint stewardship of the Breakthrough Agenda, they'll do that for an initial pilot phase of one year.

Many of you were with us in New York as well at the UN General Assembly and

you will know that on the side lines we also launched the first Breakthrough Agenda Report, put together by the IEA, by IRENA and the High Level Champions, so thank you to all of them and the ministers who attended that meeting at the UK mission

And subsequent of that we have agreed to launch a set of specific and time-bound priority actions.

Four that I want to highlight.

One, collectively we will be developing standards and rules for trade.

Secondly, we are developing demand creation plans.

Thirdly, we are working to improve the provision of finance, international assistance and research.

And fourthly we are taking steps to enhance development and demonstration.

Now I just want to give you a concrete example, one of the priority actions focuses on the research, development and deployment of technologies at that really crucial intersection of climate and food security, and that's work being done as part of the Agriculture Breakthrough.

And I am also delighted to tell you that 28 leading countries in these areas have agreed to take forward these actions across all five sectors, and collectively that represents over 50 percent of global GDP.

The final thing I want to say is that you all know this, the cost of inaction on this issue is going to be significantly more than the cost of action.

And we have a real opportunity here to build economies and to build green jobs and actually at the end of the day deliver not only a clean environment but also a wealthier set of communities across the world.

So thank you for everything you are doing and we look forward to continuing to work with you.

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**Foreign Secretary: As we honour the war dead of the past, we also remember Ukraine's fight for Freedom and**

# Democracy

Press release

Foreign Secretary visits Paris to mark the first Armistice Day since Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.



- Foreign Secretary James Cleverly is in Paris this week to mark the first Armistice Day since Russia's illegal invasion
- He will attend a remembrance service hosted by President Macron and met Chelsea Pensioners fundraising in France for the Armed Forces community
- The visit will build on work between the UK and France on global issues, from the war in Ukraine to illegal migration

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly is in Paris this week to mark the first Armistice Day since Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

On the day the UK and France commemorate the end of one conflict in Europe, the two countries will meet against the backdrop of a new war.

The Foreign Secretary will today (Friday 11 November) attend a remembrance service hosted by President Macron and meet with French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna to discuss the shared challenges facing the UK and France.

Discussions are expected to cover the two countries' support for Ukraine, joint work to improve energy security and the common challenge of illegal migration. They will also discuss preparations for next year's UK-France summit.

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said:

Since 1918 we have marked Armistice Day and paid tribute to the brave men and women who have served to give us peace. Yet as we salute our troops this year, this peace has been shattered by a Russian aggressor.

As we honour the war dead of the past, we also remember Ukraine's fight for freedom today.

The UK stands steadfast with our friends and allies in defence of freedom and democracy in Ukraine and I am proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with an historic ally in Paris today.

The Foreign Secretary will speak at the Paris Peace Forum, where international leaders will gather to drive global action in the face of common threats, including Russia's war in Ukraine.

On Thursday, the Foreign Secretary discussed the need for peace with Secretary-General of the OECD, Mathias Cormann and the effects of the invasion on energy security with Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Dr Fatih Birol.

Published 11 November 2022

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## **Software developer banned for abusing £850,000 of investments**

Adam Alexander Valdemar Norton (35), from Salford, was the director of ANorton Holdings Limited and used the trading name 'Volution Fit'. The company was incorporated in September 2018 and provided virtual software and support to gyms and fitness clubs.

The company, however, went into administration in November 2020 before going into liquidation in August 2021 and triggering an investigation by the Insolvency Service.

Investigators uncovered that Adam Norton secured £849,999 worth of investments – provided in two tranches – to help develop a mobile application.

Adam Norton, however, received the investments into his personal bank account rather than into the company's. The software developer also provided false copies of bank statements to the investors, which incorrectly showed the bank account was held in the name of ANorton Holdings rather than his own.

On 22 August 2022, the Secretary of State accepted a 12-year disqualification undertaking from Adam Norton in which he did not dispute he caused ANorton Holdings Limited to provide incorrect bank details and false bank statements on 3 separate occasions, to an investment company for the purposes of obtaining funds.

Neil North, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations for the Insolvency Service, said:

This was a gross abuse of his investors' trust and Adam Norton has been removed from the corporate arena for a substantial amount of time.

The software developer's ban sends out a clear message that where a corporate vehicle is being used to facilitate actual or potential fraudulent activity, we will not hesitate to use our powers to remove dishonest or reckless directors from the business environment.

Director Adam Alexander Valdemar Norton is of Salford and his date of birth is July 1986.

Company ANorton Holdings Limited (Company Reg no. 11549441).

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

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

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

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## [UK Defence cyber skills to be boosted through industry partnership](#)

- Defence personnel to be upskilled in tackling cyber threats
- Industry collaboration to increase UK's cyber resilience
- Work follows National Audit Office praise for the department's approach to conflict digitisation

The Ministry of Defence will collaborate with Immersive Labs, an industry leader in cyber resilience, to support the department's new Digital Skills for Defence programme to build stronger digital skills, and follows a successful trial by the British Army.

Tested against industry benchmarks, the collaboration will see personnel from the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Strategic Command and Civil Service engaged, with access to 1,600 realistic simulations and hands-on cybersecurity labs to evaluate individual and teams in decision-making against the latest threats.

As the recent National Audit Office (NAO) [report on the MOD's Digital Strategy](#) noted, the Department is showing good practice when it comes to the challenge of modern conflict rapidly digitising, affecting Defence work and

how the Armed Forces operate in the battlefield.

**Minister for Defence Procurement, Alex Chalk said:**

The NAO has rightly highlighted our focus on remaining at the forefront of digital capability, which is crucial as the shape of the modern battlefield continues to change at unprecedented speed.

Utilising the best technology and brightest minds in industry will only serve to bolster the rank of cyber experts focused on protecting the UK.

Exploiting digital capabilities and data is fundamental to our success in modern military operations and to the effective running of Defence. Building on the feedback from the NAO report, the department is striving to build a workforce with the digital skills it needs to deliver the digital transformation of defence.

The report acknowledged positive progress being made by the department on bringing together and aligning such digital practitioners across Defence. However, with a shortfall of homegrown talent and a very competitive market across the public and private sectors, the collaboration with Immersive Labs will also help identify cybersecurity talent to fill open roles and bolster the ranks of UK cyber experts.

**Director of Functional Integration, Claire Fry said:**

The Digital Skills for Defence programme is crucial in our drive to provide the right digital skills and capabilities across Defence to take advantage of the opportunity brought about by the ever-increasing pace of technological change.

Immersive Labs is one of a number of organisations we are working with to deliver training that will upskill our workforce. This will enable us to champion our One Defence Mindset and create an environment where our digital skills can flourish in a unified, connected and digitally integrated way.

MOD established the Digital Skills for Defence programme to deliver critical digital skills for Defence Leaders, Digital Professionals, and the whole Military and Civilian workforce. The programme is fundamental in building and retaining operational and business advantage. MOD's ambition goes beyond education, seeking to transform to a learning culture where teams work collaboratively across the organisation.

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# Human rights in Belarus: Joint statement to the OSCE

Mr. Chair, I am delivering this statement on behalf of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, the United States, and my own country Canada.

Two years ago, on 5 November 2020, Professor Wolfgang Benedek presented the [independent report on the human rights situation in Belarus under the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism](#) to the Permanent Council. The conclusions were clear: The 9 August presidential election was neither free nor fair, and “massive and systematic” violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms had been committed by the Belarusian security forces.

One year ago, on 4 November 2021, as a response to the deteriorating human rights situation and the Belarusian authorities' failure to respond satisfactorily to the recommendations addressed to them in the Moscow Mechanism report, [a group of 35 OSCE participating States invoked the Vienna \(Human Dimension\) Mechanism requesting information on a number of serious concerns](#). Unfortunately, one year later, we today note with regret that the recommendations for Belarusian authorities in the Moscow Mechanism report remain unaddressed, and our concerns for the human rights situation in Belarus are more dire than ever.

Over the past two years, the authorities in Belarus have continued their brutal and unprecedented crackdown on defenders of democracy in Belarus, including civil society and independent voices. The exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, is severely repressed, and those attempting to act on those rights and freedoms are systematically detained, abused, and subjected to other forms of intimidation and only harassment. According to credible reports, the number of political prisoners is now more than 1,350. This includes many ordinary Belarusians who simply protested in 2020; journalists, media actors, opposition figures, and human rights defenders, sentenced in some cases to well over a decade simply for exercising their fundamental rights. As a consequence, tens of thousands of Belarusians have been, and continue to be, forced to flee the country, to leave their homes and in some cases loved ones behind due to the untenable situation.

In addition, several credible, international reports have documented the continued pervasive use of torture and other ill-treatment. The Belarusian authorities have further increased harassment and intimidation efforts by widening of the scope of the death penalty to vaguely defined “attempted terrorist activities”. This is an alarming step, the real objective of which is to further increase repression against defenders of democracy. Mr. Chair,

In the initial letter invoking the Vienna Mechanism on 4 November 2021, we asked for information from the Belarusian authorities on a number of concerns, including on the credible reports on continuing unjust arrests and detentions, as well as the targeting of opposition figures. The Belarusian Delegation's reply did not acknowledge our legitimate concerns on any of these issues; for example, the Belarusian Delegation simply took exception to the term 'political prisoner'.

The inadequate responses we have continued to receive from the Belarusian authorities, combined with the deteriorating developments we have witnessed over the past year, clearly demonstrate there is no change in approach by the Belarusian authorities.

On the contrary, in recent months, the Belarusian authorities have intensified the brutal and unprecedented repression of the Belarusian people, and has on top of that been facilitating Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in violation of international law.

Mr. Chair,

Even as the human rights situation in Belarus has continued to deteriorate, the Belarusian Delegation has often claimed to seek dialogue on these issues here in the Permanent Council. The Vienna Mechanism is a tool for such dialogue, but it requires the Belarusian authorities to engage substantially, realistically and honestly on the subject. It requires the Belarusian authorities to recognise our legitimate continuing concerns, which mirrors those of civil society, independent media, and human rights defenders.

Against this backdrop, we repeat our questions raised under the OSCE Vienna Mechanism in the Permanent Council. We encourage the Belarusian authorities to consider these questions carefully and to provide genuine answers to this Council, including a detailed explanation of their reactions to the recommendations contained in the 5 November 2020 report under the OSCE Moscow Mechanism.

Finally, we call for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Belarus. We urge the Belarusian authorities to fully implement their international obligations and OSCE commitments, and to make use of the OSCE's tools and mechanisms to help resolve the continuing human rights crisis.

Thank you.