

UK invites Honduras to join a new global security approach

World news story

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Ambassador Whittingham explained the war should be a catalyst for rebooting, remodelling and recasting a global security architecture that has failed Ukraine.

He praised strength and unity of the free world's response to Putin's invasion, including Honduras' support at multilateral forums. Nevertheless, he stressed this collective response needs to follow through to ensure aggressors fail and are contained in the future.

This new approach melds hard security and economic security, builds stronger global alliances, recognises we are seeing the return of geopolitics, and will urge action in three areas:

1. Stronger defence – based on collectively investing more in defence, including maintaining NATO's open door policy (including for Sweden and Finland), and for NATO to adopt a more "global" outlook where it steps up work with Pacific partners.
2. Boosting economic security – reducing economic dependency on aggressors and creating stronger trade, investment, science and tech ties among allies and partners.
3. Building a stronger network of alliances – with the G7 playing a stronger role, as it has done during the Ukraine crisis, and building a deeper, more intertwined network of bilateral security and economic partnerships.

Ambassador Whittingham warned the fate of Ukraine remains in the balance and urged allies, including Honduras, to double down in ensuring Putin fails in Ukraine. The G7 and partners need to keep the pressure on Russia through

tougher sanctions, providing further military aid, and continued humanitarian support.

UK Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss, set the UK's latest position on the war in Ukraine at the [Mansion House speech](#) on 27 April. The Mansion House speech is delivered at the annual Lord Mayor's Easter Banquet. The event is a set piece in the diplomatic calendar and is attended by ambassadors, diplomats, FCDO staff and the business community.

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[UK invites Guatemala to join a new global security approach](#)

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He praised strength and unity of the free world's response to Putin's invasion, including Guatemala's active leadership at multilateral forums and welcoming of Ukrainian refugees. Nevertheless, he stressed this collective response needs to follow through to ensure aggressors fail and are contained in the future.

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[New law in place to strengthen UK professions](#)

- New law enshrines the autonomy of UK regulators to decide whether an individual with overseas qualifications is fit to practise a regulated profession in the UK
- The Professional Qualifications Act ensures UK regulators can recognise the qualifications of skilled professionals from around the world – not just the EU – so the world’s best can make their way to the UK to boost prosperity
- the law will make it easier for UK professionals to practise overseas, thanks to new trade deals and more consistent information sharing between UK and overseas regulators

A new approach to recognising professional qualifications gained overseas is now in force following Royal Assent, the government has announced today (Thursday 28 April).

The Professional Qualifications Act revokes the previous EU system for how certain professional qualifications gained overseas are recognised in the UK.

The previous EU-derived system often gave preferential treatment to holders of qualifications from the European Economic Area and Switzerland. These arrangements were unreciprocated since the UK left the EU. Under the new system, which is better suited to the UK's own needs, UK regulators have the autonomy to decide on the right approach to recognising overseas professional qualifications.

The freedom of UK regulators of professions, such as the Architects Registration Board and the General Medical Council, to decide who is fit to practise is now enshrined in UK law for the first time. This ensures UK regulators can make recognition decisions in the best interests of their profession – upholding the UK's high professional standards.

Labour Markets Minister Paul Scully said:

We're freeing our professions from outdated EU arrangements so they can decide for themselves which individuals hold the qualifications, skills and experience to meet the UK's high standards.

Making sure regulators have the powers to uphold standards is a huge step forward in making the UK the best place to work and do business.

Minister for Investment Lord Gerry Grimstone said:

The Professional Qualifications Act helps deliver a Global Britain by bolstering regulators' ability to strike ambitious international agreements, helping UK professionals get their qualifications recognised around the world.

This will spread UK skills, knowledge and innovation further across the globe, providing a boost to UK businesses exporting their services.

The Act supports the UK's world-leading professions to export their services and strengthens the UK's ability to negotiate and implement ambitious deals on the recognition of professional qualifications.

It also helps UK professionals to be recognised abroad by ensuring UK regulators can strike recognition deals with overseas counterparts including those in Australia and New Zealand following our new trade deals with those partners.

By improving information sharing between regulators and making professions' entry requirements clearer, the Act also helps aspiring professionals

understand how to be recognised in the UK.

Hugh Simpson, Chief Executive and Registrar of the Architects Registration Board (ARB), said:

The UK is a global leader in architecture and we are delighted at the passing of new legislation to help facilitate UK architects to practise globally and for international architects to work in the UK.

The Professional Qualifications Act will enable ARB to enter agreements with regulators in other countries so that UK architects can more easily register and practise internationally and international architects can register and practise in the UK. These Mutual Recognition Agreements, in which we are already in advanced stages of negotiation with the USA, Australia and New Zealand, will ensure standards are maintained and the public can remain confident that only suitably qualified and competent architects can practise in the UK.

The Act applies across the UK and provides for the devolved administrations to make regulations within devolved legislative competence.

The Act also includes targeted measures to improve the regulation of professions across the UK. This includes increasing transparency around entry and practice requirements and improving information sharing between regulators. Taken together, this will help professionals navigate the regulatory landscape through greater transparency around entry and practice requirements.

The Act's key provisions will come into effect between now and the Autumn and the government will work closely with regulators and other stakeholders on the dates for commencement and to make sure regulators are well prepared.

The Act strengthens the UK's ability to negotiate and deliver ambitious arrangements on the recognition of professional qualifications with current and future trade partners. It means the government can further empower UK regulators to strike deals on recognition with their overseas counterparts, helping UK professionals get their qualifications recognised internationally.

The Act helps aspiring professionals understand how to access UK professions and helps UK professionals seeking to get their qualifications recognised to practise overseas. This will include through the continued provision of an assistance centre to help professionals navigate this.

The government will continue to consult and work in partnership with regulators to uphold their autonomy and UK standards, and to ensure the new approach remains up to date.

New subsidy control system will support UK jobs, boost the economy and strengthen the union

- New system will drive economic growth and prosperity and help level-up across the UK
- Rules mean every subsidy must deliver strong benefits for local communities and ensure good value for money for the British taxpayer
- Provides a more agile and flexible system, better suited to the UK's own needs than the EU's bureaucratic EU State aid regime

A new system to regulate subsidies to business receives Royal Assent today (28 April) to boost the economy and put the UK on the front foot in emerging industries, helping growth and jobs.

Under the new rules, the Devolved Administrations and local authorities will, for the first time, decide whether to issue subsidies by following UK-wide principles, delivering good value for the British taxpayer while being awarded in a timely and effective way.

Previously, the devolved administrations were subject to the EU's prescriptive State aid regime which governed the powers of elected governments in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast to support viable businesses. Under the EU system, all subsidies except those under a 'Block Exemption Regulation' had to undergo a lengthy bureaucratic process of being notified to and approved by the European Commission in advance, delaying vital funds from reaching viable businesses in good time.

These UK-wide principles will allow public authorities to deliver subsidies where they are needed without facing excessive red tape, creating a level playing field for subsidies across the entire country.

Small Business Minister Paul Scully said:

The new subsidy control regime is robust yet agile, allowing public authorities to provide subsidies where they are needed most.

Under the EU's State aid regime, the UK was bound by excessive bureaucracy and lengthy pre-approval processes, however now we have the flexibility to better support businesses to grow and thrive, in a way that suits the interests of UK industries and supports the levelling-up agenda.

It is expected to come into force in Autumn 2022.

The new system will prohibit subsidy races in which public authorities try to outbid each other's subsidies to attract investment and will also give public authorities the flexibility to design subsidies according to local needs, including to give subsidies that target localised and regional inequalities.

The new rules will help foster a vibrant free market economy in the UK by banning unlimited government guarantees to businesses as well as subsidies granted to "ailing or insolvent" enterprises where there is no credible restructuring plan.

The UK's new system will also contribute to meeting the UK's international commitments on subsidy control, including its international commitments at the World Trade Organization and in Free Trade Agreements.

Further information

- A subsidy is a financial contribution using public resources which confers a benefit on a specific recipient. This could include, for example, a cash payment, a loan with interest below the market rate, or a guarantee. Subsidies can be given by all levels of government in the UK.
- Enforcement will be through the UK's courts and tribunal system. Jurisdiction to judicially review the award of subsidies will be given to the Competition Appeal Tribunal.
- Since 1 January 2021, the UK has followed the commitments on subsidy control set out in its free trade agreements with other countries, notably the provisions of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules on subsidies, as well as the relevant provisions within the Northern Ireland Protocol. How to implement our international commitments in UK law is a domestic decision and the new subsidy control regime announced today builds on, and is aligned with, these commitments.
- The new Subsidy Advice Unit will be set up within the Competition and Markets Authority.
- To further streamline the new regime, the government is exempting a limited set of subsidies from the subsidy control principles, such those required for safeguarding national security and subsidies granted temporarily to address emergencies such as flooding. As is the case now, all subsidies will still be subject to WTO rules.
- On 25 March, the government launched a public consultation on the initial Subsidies of Interest/Particular Interest (SSoPI) regulations. The consultation closes on 6 May.
- Ahead of the new regime coming into force, the government will be publishing guidance to support public authorities getting ready for the new rules.
- Until the new regime comes into force in Autumn 2022, public authorities are required to follow the commitments on subsidy control set out in its Free Trade Agreements with other countries, notably the provisions of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, and the WTO rules on subsidies, as well as the relevant provisions within the Northern Ireland Protocol.
- Article 10 of the Northern Ireland Protocol provides that EU State aid

rules would continue to apply to the UK in respect of measures which affect trade in goods and wholesale electricity between Northern Ireland and the EU. In practical terms, this would primarily apply to aid granted to manufacturers of goods and wholesale electricity located in Northern Ireland. Subsidies for services in Northern Ireland will be within scope of the new regime.

- However, as first set out in the Command Paper of July 2021, the Government considers the existing provisions in Article 10 redundant in their current form. The current situation prevents subsidies from being granted on an equal basis across the UK, so there are issues that need to be addressed. We need to see increased engagement from the EU on the Protocol, so that we can work towards solutions.

Health and Care Bill granted Royal Assent in milestone for healthcare recovery and reform

- The Health and Care Bill has today received Royal Assent, marking a milestone in the recovery and reform of how health and care services work together
- It will ensure the NHS can rebuild from the pandemic and tackle the Covid backlog, harness the best ways of working and ensure people are benefitting from more joined-up care
- Long-term plans for recovery and reform are backed by £36 billion over the next three years through the Health and Care Levy

The Health and Care Bill has today received Royal Assent by Her Majesty The Queen, enacting the most significant health legislation in a decade into law.

The Act introduces measures to tackle the Covid backlogs and rebuild health and social care services from the pandemic, backed by £36 billion over the next three years through the Health and Care Levy. It will also contain measures to tackle health disparities and create safer, more joined-up services that will put the health and care system on a more sustainable footing.

The Health and Care Act builds on the proposals for legislative change set out by NHS England in its Long Term Plan, while also incorporating valuable lessons learnt from the pandemic to benefit both staff and patients.

It marks an important step in the government's ambitious health and care agenda, setting up systems and structures to reform how health and adult social care work together, tackle long waiting lists built up during the pandemic, and address some of the long-term challenges faced by the country including a growing and ageing population, chronic conditions and

inequalities in health outcomes.

The Integration White Paper published in February will build on the Act to ensure people receive the right care for them in the right place at the right time. It follows the People at the Heart of Care White Paper which set out a ten year vision for social care funded through the Health and Care Levy, and the Covid Backlog Recovery Plan outlining NHS targets to tackle waiting lists. Dedicated plans to tackle health disparities are set to be published in due course.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The Health and Care Act is the most significant change to the healthcare system in a decade and will put it in the strongest possible position to rebuild from the pandemic, backed by our record funding.

These measures have broad support and will harness the best ways of working to ensure people are receiving high quality, joined up care.

As part of the measures to deliver more joined up care, every part of England will be covered by an Integrated Care System (ICS) bringing together NHS, local government and wider system partners to put collaboration and partnership at the heart of healthcare planning.

For example, the existing non-statutory Somerset Integrated Care System is already rolling out innovations such as a 24/7 helpline that directs people looking for mental health support to services across the voluntary sector, social care and NHS. The scheme brings together doctors, nurses, psychologists, and charities such as Age UK, Citizen's Advice, Rethink Mental Illness and others through a shared system for recovery and care planning, so all professionals involved in the person's care are able to communicate with each other. This means that patients are directed to the right service they need first and reduces any time spent speaking to various services until they find the right one.

Elsewhere, South Warwickshire Foundation Trust rolled out a 'discharge to assess' model to improve the process for patients being discharged from hospital. This included outpatient emergency care, an integrated community health and social care team, frailty services and early supported discharge. Joint working between Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and local NHS partners has made sure patients leave hospital as soon as they are ready, freed up hospital beds and ensured people got the right care in the right place. As a result the hospital now has zero bed-related elective care cancellations, and is well ahead of the Covid Backlog Recovery Plan trajectories.

Amanda Pritchard, NHS chief executive said:

The Covid pandemic has shown what can be achieved when we work together across NHS teams, organisations and systems with our partners in the care sector and beyond, and these reforms will help us to deliver for patients and their families. As the NHS works flat out to recover services and address the Covid-19 backlogs that have inevitably built up during the pandemic, these reforms will accelerate the changes set out in the NHS Long Term Plan that are already giving people greater choice, better support and more joined up care when they need it.

The Act also introduces measures that will:

- Level up health disparities in oral health and obesity through making it simpler to fluoride water in more areas across England, and regulating unhealthy food and drink advertising;
- Make services safer by establishing the Health Services Safety Investigations Body, an independent public body which will investigate incidents that have implications for patient safety and help improve systems and practices;
- Crack down on the use of goods and services in the NHS tainted by modern slavery and human trafficking with a view to ensuring that the NHS is not buying or using goods or services produced by or involving any kind of slave labour;
- Ensure our health and social care workforce have the right skills and knowledge to provide informed care to autistic people and people with a learning disability by making specialised training (the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training) mandatory by law;
- Support victims of abuse and respond to recent child safeguarding tragedies by committing to looking at information sharing in relation to the safeguarding of children, and requiring Integrated Care Boards to set out any proposed steps to address the particular needs of victims of abuse;
- Safeguarding women and girls by banning the harmful practices of virginity testing and hymenoplasty;
- Introduce regulation of non-surgical cosmetic procedures and improve the way we regulate medical professions;
- Address the barriers to joined up working, by supporting data sharing between health and social care and removing barriers in the hospital discharge process, reducing unnecessary delays for patients;
- Remove needless bureaucracy in the system, allowing staff to get on with their jobs providing the best possible treatment and care for their local populations. It also ensures that the NHS is fully accountable to parliament and the public, while maintaining the NHS's clinical and day-to-day operational independence;
- Explicitly set out the parity of mental health and physical health and ensure transparency around the spending allocated to mental health support; and
- Support the government's ambitious adult social care reforms, by creating the right framework for assuring, funding and sharing data on social care, to enable individuals to maintain their independence for

longer.

Matthew Taylor, chief executive of the NHS Confederation said:

Our members – leaders across the NHS – have been clear that collaboration and partnership working at the local level must be the future of health and care. This legislation will help to facilitate that.

We are pleased that government has heeded our calls to put safeguards on the new powers the legislation gives the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care over local service reconfigurations, which will let local leaders lead.

We welcome the extent of engagement we and our members have had with the Department over the course of the Bill process.

Our members working across Integrated Care Systems look forward to fulfilling their statutory responsibilities from July 1st, working to deliver the best possible care for the local communities they serve.

Louise Ansari, National Director at Healthwatch England said:

Today marks an important milestone in creating an NHS that makes it easier for everyone to get the care they need.

Integrated care is an ideal incentive for health and social care services, councils and the voluntary sector to work together to design services that work better and reflect the way people use them. The new structures will work best if people, and in particular those from seldom heard groups, get truly involved and have a say in planning our health and care. By integrating services across communities, we have a chance to address delays and gaps in care.

As a statutory champion for patients' rights, we look forward to playing our part, supporting the NHS to hear and act on the issues that people face so that professionals and the public can work together to overcome the current challenges and build a better NHS for generations to come.

Kathy McLean, ICB Chair Designate Nottingham said:

The Health and Care Bill is a key moment for health and social care services across the country. In Nottingham and Nottinghamshire we are proud to be part of one of the biggest and most exciting changes the NHS has seen in recent times that firmly puts

collaboration at the heart of delivering joined up care.

We welcome the bill which supports our focus to tackle health inequalities and ensure better ways for people to access health and care services. By building on lessons learnt during the pandemic we will support our staff to make the impactful changes needed set out in the Long Term Plan. This Bill ensures we can work together as a system to rebuild from the pandemic and tackle backlogs all while supporting each other for the benefit of our public.

Cllr James Jamieson, Local Government Association Chairman, said:

The LGA supports the clear focus on improving community health and wellbeing through greater integration between the NHS and local government in the Health and Care Act. The flexible and enabling nature of the legislation is positive recognition that systems are best placed to make their own arrangements for joining up services and setting their own strategies for improving community health, are we are glad to see this bill supporting local areas making their own decisions.

The LGA has worked closely with the Government to ensure that local decision making and a strong role for local authorities are key features of this legislation. We are also pleased that the Government has listened to and acted on the LGA proposals that the Secretary of State's increased powers must be used in consultation with local government and relevant, local NHS organisations.

Rob Webster, ICB CEO Designate West Yorkshire and Harrogate:

We are well prepared for the implementation of this act, which rightly focuses on inequality, collaboration and joining up care around the needs of people. This is essential in the health and care system dealing with the issues arising from the Covid pandemic, in particular waiting times and the disproportionate impact on people with disabilities and living in areas of deprivation. It will also be a relief for our hard working teams, removing uncertainty about their future after the short delay.

Richard Murray, Chief Executive of The King's Fund, said:

The main thrust of this Act is a welcome shift away from the focus on competition between health care organisations towards a new model of collaboration, partnership and integrated care. The legislation gives the NHS and its partners greater flexibility to deliver joined-up care to the increasing numbers of people who rely on multiple different services. Now the hard work of implementation

begins. Local health and care leaders will need support, endurance and commitment to turn the opportunity of this Act into a reality for local communities.

The government will continue to build on these strong foundations to ensure services have the long-term resource needed to provide world-class care. At the heart of this agenda are three key aims for reform; a focus on prevention, a commitment to delivering more personalised care and continuing to improve healthcare performance.