

The Murad Code should become the gold standard to deliver justice and accountability: UK statement at the UN Security Council

May I begin by thanking you, Special Representative Pramila Patten.

The relationship and the strength of the relationship between the United Kingdom and your office is something we hold very dear, and we welcome the continued coordination and strength of the work we're doing on this important agenda.

To our brave activists, Mariana Karkoutly and Hilina Berhanu, for your stark insights, and also for your practical recommendations of the responsibilities and also the importance of action from us, the United Nations Security Council.

And of course, to you, Nadia Murad – your determination, your courage, your example has at its heart, a real willpower to build a world for survivors. Simply put, it's an inspiration for me, and I know I speak for every Member of the Security Council. And your testimony today is again reflective of that central objective that we all share.

Today, as we've heard from the very powerful testimonies and the reports of SRSB Patten, we continue to see disturbing reports emerging yet again of rape and sexual violence from Ukraine.

We are now once again reminded that when conflict erupts, sexual violence soon follows.

As we've heard, in northern Ethiopia, Syria and Ukraine, we have witnessed the devastating effects on communities, on families, and especially on women and girls. It is important we come together and stand for these courageous survivors – not just to provide hope, but to provide action, and ultimately justice.

It is clear that impunity continues to be the norm for perpetrators. It should be an exception, and we must try for that.

And frankly put, the fact, here we are, that this is happening, and let us reflect on that, in the year 2022, it is not just unacceptable, it is utterly shocking.

And therefore, we must strive to do more collectively to end the violence, and ultimately, as we heard from each of the very powerful statements, deliver justice and accountability for survivors.

We need to ensure that survivors can safely record their experiences, in a

way that strengthens the pursuit of justice.

That is an important first, yet pivotal and crucial, step towards accountability.

However, as we've heard from Nadia Murad's powerful testimony, this is far from a reality for many survivors around the world. And frankly put, we must ask the question of ourselves, why? Why have we failed to protect? Why have we failed in our collective duty to put survivors first?

Despite numerous guidance for those collecting information and evidence from survivors and witnesses, mistakes, frankly, continue to be made. Mistakes, not through any bad intent, yet mistakes which can allow the wheels of justice to slow, and indeed destroy lives.

Too many survivors are not told about what their options are, or given the time and space to make their own choices about how their testimonies are best used.

Too many survivors continue to face unnecessary re-interviewing. 27 times – reflect on that figure, colleagues – 27 times, as one courageous survivor told me, they had to give an interview.

Interviews are being interrupted, they're being overheard, and by that, the impact of those testimonies diluted, and they do not meet the threshold – which too often is put forward as the reason why prosecutions cannot take place.

The consequences can be devastating, soul destroying, ending all hope. Simply put, it is unacceptable.

Survivors are being re-traumatised time and time again. And work to deliver justice and accountability is being undermined.

So therefore it is vital that we end these harmful practices and put survivors' rights at the very heart of the evidence gathering.

And therefore I am greatly humbled to join Nadia's Initiative and the Institute for International Criminal Investigations in releasing the Murad Code today.

Firstly, Nadia thank you – we've known each other many years – you inspire me and your courage is a powerful example to us all.

The Murad Code is a global code of conduct for the collection of information and evidence from survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

It has been shaped by survivors, governments, international organisations and civil society.

Because it is our responsibility to place survivors' needs at the heart of our work.

I urge everyone involved in documenting and investigating conflict-related sexual violence to follow the Murad Code. In fact, go further – it should become the gold standard for any NGO, government agency or human rights institution in the field. Putting survivors first and at the centre of investigations should not be optional.

But our collective efforts cannot stop there.

This year, we are exploring all options to strengthen international action, including a new international Convention as proposed by our Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

From the 28th – 30th November, we will also host an international conference to boost our work, marking ten years since the launch of the UK's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative in November this year.

We will continue to bring faith and belief leaders together in support of survivors through the Declaration of Humanity.

We will make further progress to enhance the rights and wellbeing of children born of sexual violence, following the Call to Action launched in November.

And we will respond robustly to reports of sexual violence in conflict, wherever they occur.

We have heard about the distressing situation in Ethiopia. The nature and scale of reports of sexual violence that have come out of Tigray, Amhara and Afar are deeply disturbing. Yet many communities remain cut off from communications and therefore unable to tell their story.

That is why it was important to us, today, to invite the first Ethiopian civil society representative to brief the Council on the situation in northern Ethiopia.

And what's more, to hear from an Ethiopian woman who has been integral to feminist youth movements, and who has recently worked with communities across the country who have been affected by conflict-related sexual violence.

The UK Government has committed more than £7 million to support survivors in northern Ethiopia and improve national accountability systems. We are also providing expertise to build capacity to hold perpetrators to account.

I welcome the African Union's leadership on conflict-related sexual violence. 30 African countries now have a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security – providing an essential framework for addressing this issue and women's political participation in conflict-affected contexts.

We have heard again how rape is being used to destroy the lives of Syrians by various parties to the conflict.

The UK has spent over £4 million through its Conflict, Stability and Security Fund in response since 2016 in response.

We have strengthened the medical documentation of attacks in accordance with international standards, and improved support services for survivors.

I was pleased to see the first conviction for conflict-related sexual violence offences in Syria, delivered in Koblenz in January.

The UK will also continue to support Afghan women, who face some of the highest rates of violence in the world, and are watching the progress made in recent decades unravel.

Islam is clear on equality for girls and rights for women: we continue to press the Taliban on this issue.

We are pushing to integrate services for all survivors of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, into Afghan healthcare provision.

We are also working with the International Rescue Committee, the UN Population Fund and others on programmes to protect women and girls, and provide access to gender-based violence services.

We are collectively shocked at the abhorrent testimonies which are emerging from Ukraine. The reports of rape and sexual violence committed by Russian armed forces must be properly investigated.

That is why the UK has worked with partners to refer the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court, to establish a Commission of Inquiry through the UN Human Rights Council and, with the support of Ukraine, to establish an OSCE Mission of Experts. In March, we announced an additional £1 million in funding for the ICC to help uncover evidence of war crimes.

Sexual violence in conflict is a vile stain on humanity. Wherever it occurs, it is our moral duty to work together to help survivors, and do all we can, to stamp it out.

To perpetrators – every person in every society must be determined to send a clear and unequivocal message – you will be found, you will face justice, however long it takes.

And to survivors – thank you for the hope, thank you for your courage – we will always stand with you and for you.

Sexual violence is a crime against you, it's a crime against our common and shared humanity.

[‘Drop-in’ on Pevensey Bay to](#)

Eastbourne Coastal Management plans

The scheme will become one of the largest coastal flood risk schemes in the country, using innovative and creative solutions, protecting an estimated 10,000 homes.

Since the Pevensey Bay to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme launched late last year, valuable insight is being gathered from local people to help shape the future of the new flagship large scale coastal defence project.

From 25 April to 5 May there will be face to face drop-in sessions at various locations in Eastbourne, Sovereign Harbour and Pevensey Bay. As well as virtual webinars which will be open for all.

People have the chance to listen to the project team discuss some of the possible future solutions for this coastline and ask questions. There will also be guided walks along the project area with a member of the project team. Webinars are being held on 27 April, 3 May and 6 May.

Further details will be available on the [project website](#)

Nick Gray, the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Manager in the area said:

Our work on the scheme so far has enabled us to understand how much the seafront is valued by local people and the concerns they have on rising sea level and the impact that the climate crisis will have at a local level.

As our plans develop, we are keen to keep local people regularly updated with progress and I urge residents to come along to one of our drop-in sessions and meet with us. We want to work with coastal communities to shape the future management of the frontage together.

The drop-in sessions will look at what is possible within the project programme and the options available for the coastal frontage. Whilst there are various opportunities available, nothing has been decided yet in the complex process of designing a new coastal future in this area.

The scheme will become one of the largest coastal flood risk schemes in the country. It uses innovative and creative solutions to maximise economic, environmental, and social opportunities to deliver multiple benefits.

Sea levels are projected to rise by over one metre in the south of England. This alongside increasingly powerful storms means the risk of flooding, damage to property and erosion increases all the time. Ultimately this scheme will help make Pevensey Bay to Eastbourne more resilient to coastal flooding.

When completed, the new sea defences will increase protection to an estimated 10,000 homes, key infrastructure, local businesses, heritage sites and nature conservation areas.

Councillor Colin Swansborough, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, said:

I am delighted with how residents are already engaging with the project team and hope that this momentum will continue through to the drop-in sessions that are scheduled over the coming weeks.

The headlines around the project understandably reflect the long-term risk of flooding along the seafront and the sea defence work that is required. However, it is really exciting that the scheme will also be designed to enhance local biodiversity and help the town meet our climate change commitments, such as becoming carbon net zero.

There are face-to-face drop-in events and online sessions planned, so whatever format works best for individuals, there are opportunities to get involved and I encourage as many residents as possible to do exactly that.

The Pevensey Bay to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme aligns with the long-term goal of a nation resilient to climate change, green growth and a sustainable future as outlined in the Environment Agency's 5-year plan. 'EA2025' outlines the ways in which the organisation is working towards a greener, healthier future.

[County Durham man fined for illegal fish killing](#)

Press release

The Environment Agency is urging anglers and rivers users to remain vigilant to suspicious activity after a man is fined for killing fish with banned equipment.



The gaff and lamp used during the incident.

Jordan Aldworth, 26, of St John's Walk in Escomb, near Bishop Auckland, was fined £450 and ordered to pay costs of £145.

He pleaded guilty to killing or taking fish using illegal equipment at County Durham & Darlington Magistrates' Court on 5 April.

On 25 November 2020, acting on information from the public, an Environment Agency fisheries enforcement team took up an evening watch on the River Wear near Escomb.

They saw Mr Aldworth, along with two other people, using a light and an illegal gaff (a spear with a large hook at the end) to kill salmon in the shallow waters. The group was later stopped by police and Environment Agency fisheries enforcement officers.

Mr Aldworth used the illegal equipment to kill salmon at a time when the fish are at their most vulnerable during the spawning period, when they are also protected by a fishing "close season".

The River Wear is an important fishery for migratory salmon and sea trout, and the gravel-based shallows near Escomb are an established spawning ground.

David Shears, Senior Fisheries Enforcement Officer for the Environment Agency in the North East, said:

The law against using this damaging equipment exists to protect future salmon and trout populations. We're thankful to the people who report illegal activity to us and urge the public to look out for anything suspicious and report it right away.

We won't hesitate to take action to stop illegal fishing or killing and hopefully this will act as a deterrent for anyone thinking of breaking the law.

Those who fish illegally can expect to be prosecuted and face a fine of up to £2,500. Illegal fishing can be reported to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60.

You can buy a rod licence [online](#)

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Fourteen people recognised by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Mid Glamorgan

Able Cadet David Morgan of Porthcawl Sea Cadet Corps, Cadet Corporal Nyah Pope of Dyfed and Glamorgan Army Cadet Force, Cadet Flight Sergeant Garyn Kiff of No 1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets and Cadet Flight Sergeant Corey Luke of No 3 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets have been appointed as Lord-Lieutenant cadets for Mid Glamorgan for 2022.

The Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Mid Glamorgan, Colonel Phil Hubbard OBE appointed the four on behalf of the Lord-Lieutenant, Professor Peter Vaughan QPM CStJ at an awards ceremony at Pontypridd Army Reserve Centre.

Around 100 people attended the event on April 7, to mark the new appointments and celebrate high achievers from the reserve and cadet communities.

The role of Lord-Lieutenant cadet lasts for one year and includes attendance with the Professor, who acts as the Queen's representative, at a number of official engagements such as Remembrance events, Royal visits and parades.

The four will follow in the footsteps of Able Cadet Aaron Thomas from Pontypridd of Rhondda Sea Cadet Corps, Cadet Flight Sergeant Morgan Hunter-Smith from Merthyr Tydfil of No 1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets and Cadet Warrant Officer Maddison Parkhouse from Bridgend of No 3 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets who were awarded the Lord-Lieutenant's Certificate and Badge for being the 2021 representatives.

Seven adults were also recognised for their outstanding service and devotion to duty and awarded the Lord-Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit.

They were Warrant Officer First Class Mark Edwards of HMS CAMBRIA, Colour Sergeant Andrew Jones of 3rd Battalion The Royal Welsh, Sergeant Jonathan Wood of No 2 Flying Training School RAF, Flying Officer Matthew Hackett of No 1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets, Warrant Officer Ian King of No 1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets, Civilian Instructor Karen Gough of No 1 Welsh Wing RAF Air Cadets and Mr Richard Jones of Porthcawl Sea Cadet Corps.

There are nearly 5,000 cadets in Wales who gain skills and qualifications through working with local communities, charities and taking part in a

variety of practical activities. The cadet syllabus is delivered by 1,500 volunteering adult Instructors and civilian assistants, who give up their spare time on weeknights and weekends.

The virtual awards event was organised by the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (RFCA) for Wales – an organisation that has supported the Armed Forces for over 100 years.

Government uses Brexit freedoms to protect our seas

Damaging fishing activity will be prohibited in four new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the government has announced today. The move has been made possible by new post-Brexit freedoms which allow the government to protect rare habitats and wildlife in UK waters.

The [byelaws](#), which have been subject to extensive consultation with industry and other stakeholders, will come into force in two months' time (13 June 2022).

They are being introduced using new powers under the Fisheries Act, the UK's first major domestic fisheries legislation in nearly 40 years. The new measures will prohibit fishing activities in MPAs where there is evidence that they harm wildlife or damage habitats.

The four byelaws ban the use of bottom trawls, dredges, demersal seines and semi-pelagic trawls, collectively known as bottom towed gear, over certain areas. There are also additional restrictions in two of the sites preventing the use of certain static gears such as pots, nets or lines over especially sensitive areas.

The byelaws will bring in management measures on fishing within these four MPAs in English waters:

- Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation
- Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation
- South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone
- The Canyons Marine Conservation Zone

Environment Secretary, George Eustice, said:

“Outside the EU, we are using our new freedoms to protect our marine environment. We will be stopping trawling and dredging in these Marine Protected Areas to protect wildlife and habitats, through powers we have in our Fisheries Act 2020.”

Tom McCormack, Chief Executive Officer of MMO, said:

“Many of our inshore marine protected areas are already protected through MMO and Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority byelaws.

“The Fisheries Act includes new powers allowing us to better manage and control fishing in our offshore Marine Protected Areas.

“These new byelaws represent the next step in our nature recovery journey, ensuring our marine life can recover and thrive.”

The first four MPAs were chosen as a priority to help protect their vibrant and productive undersea environments. They include the Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation, which has the largest shallow sandbank in British waters and supports commercial fish species such as cod and plaice, as well as sand eels that provide an important food source for kittiwakes, puffins and porpoises. They also include the Canyons Marine Conservation Zone which protects rare and highly sensitive deep water corals.

The names of the byelaws are: