

Statement from the UK Presidency of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on their use in Ukraine

Press release

The United Kingdom, as the President of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), has made a statement setting out our grave concerns about reports of the use of cluster munitions in the Russian invasion of Ukraine



The United Kingdom, as the President of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), is gravely concerned by reports of the use of cluster munitions in the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Convention on Cluster Munitions was born out of a collective determination to address the humanitarian consequences of these weapons, which have had a devastating impact on civilians in many conflict areas. The United Kingdom calls upon all those that continue to use such weapons to cease immediately, and calls upon all states that have not yet done so to join the Convention without delay.

States Parties to the CCM underscore our obligation never under any circumstances to use cluster munitions, and in accordance with the object and provisions of the Convention, we condemn any use of cluster munitions by any actor, remaining steadfast in our determination to achieve a world entirely free of any use of these weapons.

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UK backs ambitious global action to tackle plastic pollution

As the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) in Nairobi draws to a close, the UK has worked with international partners to secure a breakthrough on negotiations to kickstart a new legally binding treaty on plastic pollution.

While the terms of the treaty are still to be negotiated it could include measures that promote sustainable production and consumption of plastics, as well as more environmentally sound waste management.

It is also hoped it will help tackle marine plastic pollution, one of the greatest global environmental challenges. It's predicted that unless action is taken there will be a threefold increase in the amount of plastic flowing into the ocean between 2016 and 2040.

This comes as our landmark Environment Act gives us a raft of new powers to step-up our war against plastic pollution. We are also committed to introducing a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers, which will recycle billions more plastic bottles and stop them being landfilled or littered.

At the conference, which was attended by the Lord Zac Goldsmith, UK Government Minister for International Environment, the UK provided support to kick start negotiations on a legally binding treaty on plastic pollution. The UK has also supported other ambitious action, including on:

- Establishing an intergovernmental Science Policy Panel to conduct horizon scanning, assess current issues and facilitate communication between scientists and policy makers
- Agreeing on the importance of nature-based solutions and on actions to scale up their implementation to simultaneously provide benefits to people and the planet.

Lord Zac Goldsmith, UK Government Minister for International Environment said:

This agreement by governments at UNEA is truly historic, and I'm so proud that the UK co-sponsored the proposals and helped get them over the line. In the space of just one human lifetime, we have caused unimaginable damage to the global environment, choking every single part of the global ocean with plastic pollution. And although there is much to be done now to turn it into an ambitious and far-reaching treaty, we can now begin to close this ugly chapter. I am so grateful to UK negotiators for their fantastic work securing agreement this week.

While there are multilateral agreements to tackle biodiversity loss and

climate change, up to now there has been no equivalent agreement to tackle plastic pollution.

The resolution, proposed by Peru and Rwanda, had received strong support and was backed by over 60 countries.

The plans have also received considerable support from the private and third sector with 111 organisations having signed [The Business Call for a UN Treaty on Plastic Pollution](#) including Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, P&G and Unilever.

The resolution titled “End plastic pollution: towards a legally binding international instrument” establishes an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) tasked with preparing a new treaty that would address plastic pollution through a life-cycle approach, with the aim of producing the treaty by 2024.

The UK was also a key proponent of plans for a new science-policy panel to contribute to policy making on the sound management of chemicals and waste, and preventing pollution. This will act in a similar way to the IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which provides advice to governments on the scientific consensus on climate science.

This new science-policy panel will produce assessments on current issues; identify possible future risks and opportunities and provide up-to-date and relevant information, promoting effective communication between scientists and policy makers.

We have made nature a top priority during our COP26 Presidency year alongside strong action on cutting emissions. The UK has continued to drive international support for nature-based solutions that address biodiversity loss, climate change and poverty, co-sponsoring a resolution on their benefits and how to scale them up.

[UK Statement on Ukraine to the Emergency Meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors](#)

World news story

Delivered by Ambassador Corinne Kitsell at the International Atomic Energy Agency, 2 March 2022



Thank you Chair,

The United Kingdom would like to thank Canada and Poland for requesting this emergency meeting of the Board of Governors. We fully support the resolution text before us.

The United Kingdom is clear that Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state and a clear violation of international law and the UN Charter. The United Kingdom remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

We condemn the Russian Federation's unlawful actions in Ukraine and are gravely concerned that these actions seriously endanger the safety and security of nuclear materials and facilities in Ukraine. This constitutes a serious risk to the population of Ukraine, neighbouring states and the whole international community. We also condemn Russia's campaign of disinformation – including the false notion that Ukraine have been pursuing nuclear weapons.

Chair,

We strongly reaffirm the decision of the IAEA General Conference in 2009 that "any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency". Russia's actions show a flagrant disregard for this decision, and for its other international commitments under the Budapest Memorandum and the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty.

We are deeply concerned that Russia's aggression has already damaged two radioactive waste disposal sites at Kharkiv and Kyiv. We commend the efforts of the Ukrainian regulator and staff at Ukrainian nuclear facilities who continue to provide updates on the status of nuclear sites and radiation monitoring data to the IAEA. We note that data has been severely disrupted for the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant and Exclusion Zone and urge an immediate return to regular reporting from the site.

Russia's actions are also a direct threat to the IAEA's critical mission to support the peaceful use of nuclear technology and to our collective commitment to strengthen nuclear safety and security. The United Kingdom fully supports the IAEA in their professional and impartial efforts to

restore nuclear safety and security in Ukraine.

We call upon the Russian Federation to cease all unlawful activities in Ukraine. It must de-escalate and withdraw its troops, and cease all use of force against Ukrainian Nuclear facilities. Full control over all nuclear facilities within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders must be restored to the competent Ukrainian authorities, so that Ukraine can ensure their safe and secure operations in accordance with the NPT and the IAEA Statute.

Thank you Chair.

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[Statement on Ukraine crisis and its implications for charities](#)

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia is a shocking event, which has upturned the lives of many millions of people in Ukraine, and challenges the sense of peace and security in which many Europeans have lived for two generations. It seems probable that the repercussions will impact widely across society, including for many charities registered with us, responding to these events as they unfold.

The British public has already responded with immense generosity, donating millions of pounds to support those affected by the war. Together with the Fundraising Regulator, we are reminding the public that [giving to established registered charities](#) with experience of delivering humanitarian aid in challenging environments is often the most efficient and helpful way to support those in need. Many charities have launched emergency fundraising appeals, and we are reminding trustees of our guidance on [running effective and impactful appeals](#), and on [holding, moving and receiving funds safely](#).

Many charities operate in Russia, and may come under increasing pressure as a result of the implications of sanctions, difficulties in transferring funds and because of the operating environment for civil society in that country. To keep up to date with the latest financial sanctions, charities can sign up to [e-alerts from HM Treasury](#) and find guidance from the [Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation \(OFSI\)](#). We urge trustees to consider our guidance on working in high-risk areas, and to ensure that they are following [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office \(FCDO\) advice](#), and keeping staff, volunteers and funds safe.

All charities should also know their donors, and consider whether or not to accept donations, including where there may be a reputational implication for

them in doing so. [Our guidance is here](#), and we encourage all charities to read this in light of the current international context. We also have general guidance on [managing risks when working internationally](#).

There will be other implications for charities, both short and long term, that we cannot yet predict. The Commission will remain alive to the issues and risks facing charities, and we encourage charities to do likewise. We will promote or update our guidance as needed. We want to help support charities, which play such a vital role in our society, to get it right and make the biggest impact possible.

We encourage charities to visit our GOV.UK pages for any updates to our guidance, and to get in touch with our [contact centre](#) if they have any specific questions or concerns.

[Regulators urge safe giving to support Ukraine](#)



The Charity Commission and Fundraising Regulator have urged the public to 'give safely' to registered charities as people make generous donations to causes helping to support and protect people affected by the invasion of Ukraine.

As the conflict and ensuing humanitarian situation in Ukraine continues to escalate, it is vital that charitable donations of goods and money reach their intended causes. UK charities are pivotal to a collective response to this crisis.

The [Disasters Emergency Committee](#), a coalition of 15 leading UK charities, has launched its collective appeal to provide emergency aid and rapid relief to civilians suffering during the conflict. Many [registered charities](#) are also helping to provide vital life-saving services, like water, food and healthcare, to those caught up in the conflict, including those forced to flee to neighbouring countries.

By giving to a registered, regulated charity, the public can have assurance

that their funds will be accounted for in line with the charity law framework. Established charities with experience of responding to disasters are usually best placed to reach victims on the ground.

Members of the public initiating their own informal fundraising appeals that are not linked to established registered charities should be aware of the ongoing responsibilities associated with overseeing and managing funds and ensuring they are applied in line with donors' wishes.

People looking to donate to causes working in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, should make a few simple checks before giving:

- check the charity's name and registration number at www.gov.uk/checkcharity. Most charities with an annual income of £5,000 or more must be registered, and you can use the advanced search function to identify charities working in specific regions and countries
- make sure the charity is genuine before giving any financial information
- be careful when responding to emails or clicking on links within them
- contact or find out more online about the charity that you're seeking to donate to or work with to understand how they are spending their funds
- look out for the Fundraising Badge on charity fundraising materials, this is the Fundraising Regulator's logo which shows that a charity has committed to fundraise in line with the Code of Fundraising Practice

Helen Stephenson CBE, Chief Executive of the Charity Commission said:

The public, as always in times of crisis, has responded generously to help those in dire need in Ukraine itself or who have escaped to neighbouring countries. It's important that this money goes to those who need it most, those whose lives have been uprooted by fighting. We encourage everyone to follow our simple steps to check that their money gets to its intended cause. Donating to a registered charity is a good way to feel confident of that.

Gerald Oppenheim, Chief Executive of the Fundraising Regulator said:

The devastating situation in Ukraine has captured the hearts of people across the UK, leading to an outpouring of public generosity in response to fundraising campaigns. But people should think carefully before donating goods or money, so that their donations reach the people who need it most. Charities are responsible for making sure that their donations are used for the purpose they were fundraised for. That is why, if you are thinking about supporting a fundraising campaign, you should make sure that it is for an established, registered charity that is subject to charity law and fundraising regulations.

Notes to editors:

1. Further tips on [giving safely to registered charities](#) is available on GOV.UK
2. The [Charity Commission](#) is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
3. The [Fundraising Regulator](#) is the independent regulator of charitable fundraising in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Further guidance on giving safely to charity is available on the Fundraising Regulator's website.
4. If you think that a collection or appeal is not legitimate, report it to the police. If you think the collection is fraudulent report it to Action Fraud over the phone at 0300 123 2040 or online.

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Last updated 16 March 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 16 March 2022

Edited final bullet, detailing the Fundraising Badge is the Fundraising Regulator's logo

2. 2 March 2022

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