

# PM call with President Andrzej Duda of Poland: 28 February 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Polish President Andrzej Duda this afternoon.



The Prime Minister spoke to Polish President Andrzej Duda this afternoon.

The Prime Minister thanked President Duda for his close collaboration and support to ensure vital defensive and humanitarian aid reached Ukraine.

They both agreed on the need to continue to work with international partners on sanctions measures.

Sharing their condemnation of the Russian attacks on Ukraine, the leaders paid tribute to the Ukrainian people and their bravery in the recent hours and days.

The Prime Minister set out the UK's support to mitigate against the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the region, including the £40m package he announced yesterday, and said the UK stood ready to support Poland further as Ukrainians sought refuge over the border.

The Prime Minister said he looked forward to visiting Poland tomorrow, and said he would stay in close contact with the President in the coming days.

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# UK support for Ukraine following Russia's invasion: Foreign Secretary's statement 28 February 2022

With permission Mr Speaker I want to update the house on our support for Ukraine in the face of Putin's premeditated, pre-planned and barbaric invasion.

Ukraine has suffered horrific attacks. Missiles and air strikes have torn through apartment blocks. Tanks have rolled into once peaceful cities. Innocent people – including children – have lost their lives.

The situation is fluid, but as of today, Putin has not taken any major cities. Their advance has been slowed by Ukraine's fierce resistance. Putin's invasion is not proceeding to plan.

He expected to take cities quickly. He expected Ukraine to retreat. And he expected the West to be divided.

Instead, his forces were met by the heroism of President Zelensky, and the resolute determination of the Ukrainian people.

He has been met by a united west – together with our friends around the world – and we've taken decisive action.

Today we have acted with the US, EU, Japan and Canada to cut Russia's Central Bank off from our markets. The rouble has fallen by over 40% as a result. As much as \$250 billion has been wiped off the Russian stock market. And today their stock market has closed.

The EU, Germany, Sweden and others are following our lead in providing defensive weapons to Ukraine. Germany has frozen Nord Stream 2.

Putin has been confounded by our collective response. That's why he's resorting to more and more extreme rhetoric.

But of course the situation remains dire.

The government and people of Ukraine are facing a continued onslaught. The days ahead are likely to prove tougher still.

The UK and our allies will have to undergo some economic hardship as a result of sanctions. But our hardships are nothing compared to those endured by the people of Ukraine. Casualty numbers are rising and over 300,000 people have already been displaced.

This is a struggle for Ukraine's freedom and self-determination. But it is also a struggle for freedom and democracy everywhere. And for the survival of a Europe whole and free.

We feel a particular responsibility, as the UK is a signatory to the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, which provided Ukraine with security guarantees.

This premeditated invasion, in violation of international law and multiple international commitments, cannot succeed.

Putin must lose.

We are doing everything we can to stop him, and to restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We'll do this by backing Ukraine against unjustified aggression; by degrading the Russian economy and stopping it funding Putin's war machine; and by isolating Putin on the world stage.

First of all, we're backing Ukraine with defensive weapons, humanitarian aid and economic support.

The UK was the first European nation to send defensive weapons to the country. Those weapons are being used today to halt Russian tanks and defend Ukrainian towns and cities.

Our latest consignment of defensive support left Brize Norton over the weekend.

We are also leading on humanitarian support.

Yesterday my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister announced a further £40 million of humanitarian aid. This will provide Ukrainians with access to basic necessities and vital medical supplies.

We call on Russia to enable humanitarian access and safe passage for civilians to flee the violence.

The UK is also supporting Ukraine's economy – including through £100 million of ODA, and guarantees of up to \$500 million in development bank loans.

Secondly, we are cutting off funding for Putin's war machine.

We're coming together with the US, the G7 and the EU to take further decisive steps.

We have been joined by Australia, Singapore, Switzerland and many more. There is a growing list of countries who are determined that this aggression cannot stand.

We have agreed many of Russia's key banks will be removed from SWIFT system – kicking them out of international finance. This is a first step towards a total SWIFT ban.

Our collective action against Russia's Central Bank will prevent them from deploying their international reserves to mitigate the impact of our sanctions.

We are also launching a joint task force to hunt down the assets of oligarchs hit by our sanctions.

The UK is proud to lead by example.

We have already put in place the largest package of sanctions in our history.

We have sanctioned Putin and Lavrov, Russia's defence industry and a growing list of oligarchs. We have approved asset freezes on several Russian banks. We are banning Russian airlines and private jets from our airspace.

But we are determined to go much, much further.

We want a situation where they can't access their funds, their trade can't flow, their ships can't dock and their planes can't land.

Today, I can inform the House that I will be laying two new pieces of sanctions legislation.

The first introduces a set of new powers against Russia's financial sector.

It includes powers to prevent Russian banks from clearing payments in sterling.

With over 50% of Russian trade denominated in dollars or sterling, our coordinated action with the United States will damage Russia's ability to trade with the world.

And as soon as this legislation comes into force we will apply it to Sberbank – Russia's largest bank.

I will also be imposing a full asset freeze on three further banks, VEB – Russia's national development bank, SovComBank the third largest privately owned financial institution in Russia, and Otkritie, one of Russia's largest commercial banks.

We will bring in a full asset freeze on all Russian banks in days, looking to coordinate with our allies.

This same legislation will prevent the Russian state from raising debt here. And it will isolate all Russian companies – that's over three million businesses – from accessing UK capital markets.

Global giants like Gazprom will no longer be able to issue debt or equity in London.

The second piece of legislation will ban exports to Russia across a range of critical sectors.

This includes high-end technological equipment such as microelectronics, marine and navigation equipment. It will blunt Russia's military-industrial capabilities and act as a drag on Russia's economy for years to come.

I appreciate the consequences of this step, for British people and British

businesses operating in Russia.

The Department of International Trade and the Treasury will offer advice and guidance to affected UK businesses. My consular staff will continue to support British nationals in Russia, as well as those in Ukraine.

And we will keep ratcheting up our response.

More legislation will follow in coming weeks to sanction Russian-occupied territories in the Donbas, extending more sanctions to Belarus, and limiting Russian deposits in UK banks.

We will continue working through our hit list of oligarchs, focusing on their houses, their yachts, and every aspect of their lives.

In addition, we will be introducing the Economic Crime Bill tomorrow. My Rt Hon. friend the Business Secretary will be setting out more in the next Statement in the House. This is all about flushing the oligarchs' dirty money out of the United Kingdom.

We will continue working with G7 allies to cut off the Russian economy and cut the free world's dependence on Russian gas, depriving Putin of his key source of revenue.

Finally, we are also leading the diplomatic effort to ensure there is a chorus of condemnation against President Putin.

In the OSCE – a key part of the European security architecture – 45 countries condemned Russia by name.

At the UN Security Council on Friday, over 80 UN members voted for, or co-sponsored, a resolution condemning Russia's aggression.

Russia stood alone in opposing it.

Putin is isolated. No one is willing to back his war of choice.

In recent days I have spoken to my counterparts in more than 20 countries around the world. Yesterday I met G7 Foreign Ministers – where we were joined by Ukraine's brave Foreign Minister, my friend Dmytro Kuleba.

Everyone is clear that Putin must lose. And we will carry on increasing the pressure until he does. We have all seen Ukraine's determination to fight. Putin's war could end up lasting for months and years.

So I say to our Ukrainian friends: we are with you.

In Britain – and around the world – we're prepared to suffer economic sacrifices to support you.

However long it takes, we will not rest until Ukraine's sovereignty is restored.

I commend this statement to the House.

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## Government takes landmark steps to further clamp down on dirty money

Legislation to crack down on dirty money in the UK and corrupt elites will be introduced in Parliament tomorrow, 1 March 2022.

Following the commitments announced by the Prime Minister last week, the government has brought forward the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Bill in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The new legislation will help the National Crime Agency prevent foreign owners from laundering their money in UK property and ensure more corrupt oligarchs can be handed an Unexplained Wealth Order (UWO).

The new register will require anonymous foreign owners of UK property to reveal their real identities to ensure criminals cannot hide behind secretive chains of shell companies, setting a new global standard for transparency. Entities who do not declare their 'beneficial owner' will face restrictions over selling their property, and those who break the rules could face up to 5 years in prison.

Under the reforms being brought in on UWOs, those who hold property in the UK in a trust will be brought within scope and the definition of an asset's 'holder' will also be expanded to ensure individuals can't hide behind opaque shell companies and foundations.

The reforms will also remove key barriers to the use of UWOs by increasing time available to law enforcement to review material provided in response to a UWO and reforming cost rules to protect law enforcement agencies from incurring substantial legal costs if they bring a reasonable case that is ultimately unsuccessful.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

There is no place for dirty money in the UK. We are going faster and harder to tear back the façade that those supporting Putin's campaign of destruction have been hiding behind for so long.

Those backing Putin have been put on notice: there will be nowhere to hide your ill-gotten gains.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Government has taken unprecedented action in the face of barbaric Russian aggression.

Time is up for Putin's cronies hiding dirty money in the UK and this new legislation will help to crack down on economic crime, including removing key barriers to using Unexplained Wealth Orders.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The new register will shine a light on who owns what in the UK so we can flush out the oligarchs, criminals and kleptocrats who think they can use UK property to hide their illicitly obtained wealth.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury John Glen said:

We've put in place the largest and most severe package of sanctions ever imposed on Russia or indeed any major economy. It's critical that the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation has all the powers it needs to enforce financial sanctions, so we are tightening the net in this legislation to ensure the economic pain imposed on the targets of the UK's sanction regime hits home.

The Treasury will also intensify sanctions enforcement by introducing a more wide-ranging 'strict civil liability test' for monetary penalties, rather than the current one which requires firms to have knowledge or a 'reasonable cause to suspect' sanctions are being breached.

This will make it easier for the Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) to impose significant fines. A further change will mean OFSI will be able to publicly name organisations that have breached financial sanctions, but have not received a fine.

The Register of Overseas Entities, introduced in tomorrow's legislation, will apply retrospectively to property bought by overseas owners up to 20 years ago in England and Wales and since December 2014 in Scotland. It will be held by Companies House, with support from the UK's Land Registries.

These new measures are being introduced as one part of our response to tackle the scourge of economic crime in the UK and will safeguard our reputation as a clean and safe place for legitimate investment.

In addition, the government is today publishing a detailed White Paper setting out its plans to upgrade Companies House, which will mean:

- anyone setting up, running, owning or controlling a company in the UK will need to verify their identity with Companies House
- Companies House will be given the power to challenge the information that appears dubious, and will be empowered to inform security agencies

of potential wrongdoing

- company agents from overseas will no longer be able to create companies in the UK on behalf of foreign criminals or secretive oligarchs
- the quality of information provided by companies to Companies House will be improved, so that the thousands of small companies who rely on it to make business decisions can trust who they are doing business with
- filing processes for small businesses will be streamlined and digitalised
- company directors will be better able to protect personal information published by Companies House which might put them at risk of fraud or other harm

Reform of Companies House will form part of further legislation which will be introduced in the coming months via a further Economic Crime Bill to clamp down on illicit finance and improve corporate transparency, which will also include:

- new powers to seize crypto assets and bring them within scope of civil forfeiture powers to tackle the growing threat from ransomware and the use of crypto assets for money laundering
- strengthened anti-money laundering powers to give businesses more confidence to share information on suspected money laundering and other economic crime
- reforms to bear down on the use of limited partnerships as vehicles for facilitating international money laundering (including illicit Russian finance) and illegal arms movements

Separately, a new 'Kleptocracy' cell based in the National Crime Agency, announced last week, is being stood up immediately to investigate sanctions evasion. This will ensure that those seeking to bypass the severe economic sanctions announced against Russia last week, will be caught and punished.

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## [UK reviews steel trade tariff exemptions](#)

Press release

The TRA has initiated a Tariff Rate Quota review of steel products imported from developing countries and which are subject to safeguard trade remedy measures.



The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) has today [initiated a Tariff Rate Quota \(TRQ\) review](#) looking at all categories of steel products which are imported into the UK and which are subject to the safeguard trade remedy measure. The TRA will assess whether the exceptions for imports from developing countries need to be amended based on updated import data. The TRA's assessment will consider imports from all developing countries, including countries which are currently excepted from the measure and those which are not.

## **Imports from some developing countries may be exceeding 3% of total UK imports**

Tariff rate quotas (TRQs) are part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework. They specify how much of a product can be imported from a country before its imports are subject to higher tariffs. Imports from developing countries are given exceptions to these TRQs if the goods imported are less than 3% of the total imports of that product and if, collectively, these low volume exporters account for no more than 9% of the total imports of that product. Members of the WTO are responsible for managing their own developing country exceptions to TRQs and need to review these exceptions regularly to check whether any countries need to be added to or removed from the exception.

## **A trade remedy framework to protect UK industries**

The UK's trade remedies system follows WTO rules and is designed to make sure UK industries are not damaged by unfair trade practices or unexpected surges in imports. The TRA has the power to investigate imports if it thinks they may need to be countered using a trade remedy measure applied at the border. Safeguard measures temporarily restrict imports of specified goods to help domestic industries adapt to changes in market conditions.

## **How the TRQ review works**

The TRA will review the goods imported to the UK from each of the developing countries which are subject to the steel safeguard measure. If the TRA establishes that imports from a developing country have increased, taking the country's imports above the 3% threshold for exception from the measure, it can recommend that imports from that country are now subject to the measure. This will mean that imports from that country will be subject to the TRQ

residual quota which defines how much importers can bring in before paying higher tariffs, or to a quota specific to that country.

The TRA can also recommend that a developing country which was previously within scope of the safeguard measure should now be excluded if its imports have dropped below 3% of total imports of the product entering the UK.

The Secretary of State for International Trade will make the final decision based on the TRA's recommendation. If revisions to the TRQs are required, these will be provided in a notice published by the Department for International Trade.

Businesses which think they may be affected by a change in quotas for products coming from developing countries (for example, importers of these products) can visit the TRA's [public file](#) to find more information. You can also check the [list of product codes affected and the UK's list of developing countries](#). Companies can register their interest on the [TRA's online case platform](#) within seven days and comment by Tuesday 15 March 2022.

## Notes To Editors

- Safeguard measures are one of the three types of trade remedies – along with anti-dumping measures which counter goods being dumped in countries at prices below their normal price in their country of origin and countervailing measures against countervailable subsidies – that are allowed under World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules.
- The Trade Remedies Authority is the UK body that investigates whether trade remedies measures are needed to counter unfair international trade practices and unforeseen surges of imports.
- Trade remedy investigations were carried out by the EU Commission on the UK's behalf until the UK left the EU. Forty-four EU trade remedies measures of interest to UK producers were carried across into UK law when the UK left the EU and the TRA needs to review each one to check if it is suitable for UK needs.

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**[Belarus: Statement following](#)**

# conclusion of Constitutional Referendum in Belarus

The Constitutional Referendum in Belarus failed to meet international standards or offer the Belarusian people a true set of options. The lack of international observers or proper public consultation demonstrates the regime's blatant attempts to prevent a democratic process. Furthermore, the arbitrary arrests and crackdown on protests seen during voting was unacceptable.

This result follows the flawed Presidential elections in 2020 where opposition candidates, journalists and peaceful protestors were imprisoned, and protests were brutally suppressed. It also takes place amidst Belarus' unacceptable support of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

We support the Belarusian people's demand for the right to determine their own futures. We urge the authorities to engage in inclusive national dialogue with the democratic opposition and civil society.