

UK forces arrive to reinforce NATO's eastern flank

Royal Navy ships, British Army troops, and Royal Air force fighters are arriving on new deployments in eastern Europe to bolster [NATO's](#) eastern front.

HMS Trent is in the eastern Mediterranean, conducting NATO exercises with Merlin Helicopters and RAF P8 Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft. They will be shortly joined by HMS Diamond, a Type 45 destroyer, which set sail from Portsmouth yesterday.

Challenger 2 tanks and armoured vehicles of the Royal Welsh battlegroup have arrived in Estonia from Germany, with further equipment and around 1000 troops arriving over the coming days. This will lead to a doubling of the UK presence in Estonia, where the UK leads a NATO battlegroup as part of the Alliance's enhanced Forward Presence.

RAF Typhoon fighter jets have already completed their first air policing missions across the region, with an additional four aircraft based at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. Typhoons flying from bases in Cyprus and the UK are now patrolling NATO airspace over Romania and Poland alongside NATO allies with Voyager air-to-air refuelling aircraft in support.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace MP said:

"Our armed forces are once again being called upon in the service of our Nation and I salute the bravery and sense of duty shared by all our personnel who have been deployed to support NATO.

"Alongside our NATO Allies, these deployments constitute a credible deterrent to stop Russian aggression threatening the territorial sovereignty of member states."

Yesterday, the Defence Secretary held a virtual donor conference with more than 25 countries, including the US and Canada and some countries outside NATO, coordinating their support to Ukraine. They will continue to give humanitarian and military support, which includes ammunition and anti-tank weapons, and the UK has offered to conduct logistics operations to support the delivery of donations.

NATO Allies are united in response to Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and are collectively taking a range of measures to protect their security and deter further aggression. At a meeting of NATO Heads of State and government yesterday (25 February), [all 30 member nations agreed that](#):

"We will make all deployments necessary to ensure strong and credible deterrence and defence across the Alliance, now and in the future. Our measures are and remain preventive, proportionate and non-escalatory."

UK Government sanctions Vladimir Putin and Sergey Lavrov

Press release

President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will be hit with an assets freeze as part of the UK's punitive sanctions regime to degrade Russia's economy and military infrastructure.



- President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov assets frozen in latest wave of UK's punishing sanctions regime
- Both blocked from any future business in UK
- Truss: "These new sanctions send a clear message that nothing and no one is off the table."
- Hitting top of Russia's government part of co-ordinated campaign by allies to degrade Russian economy following invasion of Ukraine

President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will be hit with an assets freeze as part of the UK's punitive sanctions regime to degrade Russia's economy and military infrastructure.

In a third wave of punishing sanctions in just four days, the UK's sanctions have been strategically coordinated with international allies to impose a severe cost on Putin and his regime.

The new sanctions, which are targeted personally at Putin and Lavrov, will see any UK-based assets frozen immediately and UK companies will be barred from providing goods, services or assets to them in future.

The Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

These new sanctions send a clear message that nothing and no one is off the table. These measures reflect the horror and gravity of what Putin and his regime has done, violating the territorial integrity of a sovereign nation with an illegal and unjustified

invasion.

Today's announcement follows a sweeping package of financial sanctions targeting Russian banks, oligarchs and key strategic businesses, as well as territorial sanctions and restrictions on sovereign debt announced on Tuesday.

Previous sanctions announced as part of the UK package include:

- Assets of all Russian banks frozen including, a full asset freeze on VTB. Co-ordinated with the US, this is the single biggest financial sanction in history. Individuals and companies whose assets are frozen will be unable to undertake any business in the UK or with UK nationals.
- Russian companies will be prevented from borrowing on the UK markets, effectively ending the ability of those companies closest to Putin to raise finance in the UK. This is in addition to banning the Russian state itself from raising funds in the UK, as previously announced.
- Designated banks will be prevented from accessing Sterling and clearing payments through the UK. Banks subject to this measure will be unable to process any payments through the UK or have access to UK financial markets. A full list of previous sanctions [here](#).
- A ban on the export of a range of high-end and critical technical equipment and components in sectors including electronics, telecommunications, and aerospace.

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Russia has no support for the invasion of Ukraine: UK statement at Security Council vote

The UN Charter begins with the solemn invocation to peace:

“We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save successive generations from the scourge of war.”

That conviction has been the touchstone of the work in this Chamber since 1945.

We must not forget that our fundamental purpose here is to protect people and their futures.

To protect people from violence and conflict that destroys lives.

As we speak, women and children in Kyiv, young families in Odessa, pensioners in Kharkiv, and civilians all over Ukraine, are sheltering from Russia's military onslaught.

First, Russia claimed this was all Western hysteria.

Then, they said it was about Donetsk and Luhansk.

Now, they are bombing Kyiv.

We have seen dreadful images of Russian tanks crushing civilians in the Ukrainian capital.

A country of 44 million people is being attacked on all fronts.

Colleagues,

The resolution we are voting on today is a message to those people: that the world is on your side and stands with the Ukrainian people.

It's a message to the world: that the rules we built together must be defended. Because otherwise, who might be next?

It's a message to Russia as well.

To the brave Russian citizens who are protesting a war they do not want.

This resolution demands an end to this war.

Colleagues,

President Putin has launched a massive invasion of Ukraine. His aim is to remove its government and subjugate its people.

No fog of war is thick enough to obscure a truth this clear.

This is not self-defence under Article 51.

It is naked aggression.

It is an unprovoked, unjustified war, and this Council must condemn it.

Thank you.

Colleagues,

A large majority of the Council has just voted in favour of a resolution aimed at stopping war.

The resolution has not been adopted only because of the single veto of the permanent member of this Council who is perpetrating that conflict.

Russia claims that its invasion of Ukraine is in self-defence. This is absurd.

Russia's only act of self-defence is the vote they have cast against this resolution today.

Make no mistake: Russia is isolated.

It has no support for the invasion of Ukraine.

History will record how we voted today and which countries stood up to be counted in defence of the Charter and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The United Kingdom stands steadfast in support of the Ukrainian people and will hold Russia accountable for its aggression.

Thank you.

[PM call with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 25 February 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau this evening.



The Prime Minister spoke to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau this evening to discuss how western allies could further ratchet up pressure on the Russian regime.

The Prime Minister thanked the Canadian leader for his diplomatic efforts and coordination with allies on sanctions, and said the UK and Canada held a shared ambition in ensuring President Putin failed and was seen to fail.

The Prime Minister said allies needed to take immediate action on SWIFT, and the leaders discussed further options to increase coordinated economic pressure on Russia.

The world also needs to remain vigilant to potential for the Russian regime to further exploit vulnerabilities in other countries too, the leaders agreed.

Both leaders said President Putin's attack on Ukraine was an attack on democracies everywhere, and the world needed to stand together and support the Ukrainians in any way possible in their hour of need.

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Russia-Ukraine and UK energy: **Factsheet**

Is the Government confident that gas supply will not be disrupted?

Yes. The current situation facing the UK is not a question of security of gas supply, but of high gas prices set by international markets.

Unlike other countries in Europe, the UK is in no way dependent on Russian gas supply. Our single largest source of gas is from the UK Continental Shelf and the vast majority of imports come from reliable suppliers such as Norway.

There are no gas pipelines directly linking the UK with Russia and imports from Russia made up less than 4% of total UK gas supply in 2021.

Great Britain's highly diverse supply sources include pipelines from the UK and Norway continental shelf, interconnectors with the continent, and three Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals, providing Britain with one of the largest LNG import infrastructures in Europe. Germany, for example, has no LNG import terminals.

What are you doing to diversify supply?

The UK's exposure to volatile global gas prices underscores the importance of our plan to generate more cheap, clean renewable energy and nuclear power in the UK to reduce our reliance on expensive fossil fuels.

Thanks to the £90 billion investment we've been making in renewable energy since 2012, we already have one of the most reliable and diverse energy systems in the world.

As the Business and Energy Secretary has said, the more clean, cheap and secure power we generate at home, the less exposed we will be to expensive gas prices set by international markets.

It is vital European countries on the continent reduce their reliance on Russian gas both through alternative supplies, including the global liquefied natural gas (LNG) market – an increasingly important component of the global energy supply chain – and accelerating the transition to net zero.

This is a priority for our engagement with key international partners and we continue to work alongside them to achieve this.

What is the Government doing to mitigate any further energy bill increases for consumers?

The energy price cap has insulated millions of customers from volatile global gas prices during the winter months and will continue to do so.

We are taking decisive action to help more than 27 million households with rising energy costs, with a £200 reduction on bills this autumn and a £150 non-repayable reduction in Council Tax bills from April. This £9.1 billion package of support means the majority of households will receive a £350 boost to help with the financial pressures felt this next year by families right across the country.

This comes in addition to the existing £12 billion of support we already have in place to help families with the cost of living.

What is the Government doing to mitigate any further price rises for industry and businesses?

We remain absolutely determined to secure a competitive future for our energy intensive industries and in recent years have provided them with extensive support, including more than £2 billion to help with the costs of energy and to protect jobs.

Ministers and officials continue to engage constructively and regularly with industry and our priority is to ensure costs are managed.

Unlike other countries in Europe, the UK is in no way dependent on Russian gas supply. We meet around half of our annual gas supply through domestic production and the vast majority of imports come from reliable suppliers such as Norway.

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Should the public expect fuel prices at the pumps to rise?

The global price of crude oil has increased sharply over the past year, increasing petrol prices in countries across the world. This is a global trend and not just in the UK.

But we will do everything we can to mitigate that and to help the people of this country, but it is one of the reasons why the whole of western Europe must end its dependence on Russian oil and gas.

The £12 billion in support that we've already announced to help with the cost of living includes a freeze on fuel duty for the twelfth year in a row – the longest sustained freeze in British history.

Changes in crude oil prices are the major driver of changes in fuel prices and our own analysis shows that changes in crude oil price feed through gradually over the course of 6-7 weeks.

We are in regular contact with the industry and making it clear that industry should not take advantage of increased demand to put up prices sooner than necessary.

Can we expect to see disruption to UK fuel refineries as a result of the sanctions or disruption to fuel being imported to the UK?

The UK is a significant producer of both crude oil and petroleum products.

In the case of diesel, UK demand is met by a combination of domestic production and imports from a diverse range of reliable suppliers beyond Russia including the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, and USA.

Like other countries, the UK holds oil stocks in the unlikely event of a major oil supply disruption.

The level of oil stocks prescribed by the International Energy Agency (IEA) is accepted and adopted around the world as being sufficient to ensure resilience in the event of a major global supply disruption.

UK oil reserves are significantly above the 90 days required by the IEA.

What else is the Government doing to help address the cost of living?

We recently confirmed plans to go ahead with existing proposals to expand eligibility for the Warm Home Discount by almost a third so that three million vulnerable households will now benefit, as well as the planned £10 uplift to £150 from October.

We're providing support worth around £12 billion this financial year and next to help families with the cost of living. We're cutting the Universal Credit taper to make sure work pays, freezing alcohol and fuel duties to keep costs down, and providing targeted support to help households with their energy bills.

The further £12bn of support we are providing includes:

- The National Living Wage will increase to £9.50 an hour this April, providing an extra £1,000 pay for a full-time worker – this has risen

every year since it was introduced in 2016.

- A freeze on fuel duty for the twelfth year in a row, meaning the average driver has saved £1,900 since 2010.
- Cuts to the Universal Credit taper rate and uplift to work allowance will put an extra £1,000 extra a year into the pockets of two million low-income families.
- The £500m Household Support Fund supporting millions of households in England with essentials over the coming months.
- The Cold Weather Payment which provides £25 extra a week for poorer households when the temperature is consistently below zero.