

Press release: UK to observe a minute's silence for victims of the Finsbury Park terrorist attack

The UK will observe a minute's silence on Monday 26 June 2017.

A minute's silence will be held at 12 noon on Monday 26 June in remembrance of those affected by the terrorist attack in Finsbury Park on Monday.

The silence will be marked at all government buildings and other organisations may follow suit.

Speech: Building stronger UK-Chile sustainable construction links

First I would like to take a moment to reflect on the terrible events that have occurred in London. There has been a terrible fire in an apartment block in London. The cause is still not known, but the incident illustrates the importance of standards, structures and materials within the construction sector. Our thoughts are with all of those affected; the lives and homes lost and a community devastated. Here in Chile we are all aware of the terrible consequences caused by fires.

Today we are here to talk about sustainable and innovative construction. Over the last 15 years the UK has made substantial investment in energy and low carbon technology research, development and demonstration. This has created a strong foundation for low carbon solutions in buildings, electricity networks, renewable energy, waste and transport. In the big picture, these low carbon solutions are also paving the way for smarter cities and improved living environments. New advancements and innovative practices in sustainable construction are vital to the growth of future low carbon smart cities.

In the UK, practices in driving innovation in sustainable construction are never ending. Some examples include the development of innovation parks that pilot cutting-edge sustainable building designs and the application of efficient building systems via UK Building Information Modelling (BIM) technologies.

The UK's BRE Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) began in 1990 as the world's first sustainability assessment method for buildings. The method's focus on sustainable value and adaptability to local and climatic conditions

has led to BREEAM becoming an international best practice. Since 1990, the BREEAM has been adapted and applied in over 70 countries and used to certify over 500,000 BREEAM developments globally.

From 2013-2014 we were able to adapt the best practices, lessons learned and experiences related to sustainable construction in the UK to the Chilean context through the project "Code for Sustainable Homes in Chile". This project, supported by the British Embassy Santiago's Prosperity Fund, was implemented by BRE in collaboration with the Chilean Ministry of Housing. Through this collaboration we were able to develop the standards and references for Chile's first sustainable construction code.

It is great to see that the results and collaborations from this project remain sustainable not only through the Ministry of Housing's sustainable construction strategy, but also through new collaboration opportunities set out between BRE and IDIEM from the University of Chile in the MOU that will be signed today.

We look forward to the development of new low carbon solutions, research links and innovative products for the sustainable construction sector in Chile as a result of this MOU collaboration and future work between IDIEM, BRE and a number of key local stakeholders as part of the upcoming technological innovation centre on sustainable construction.

Press release: Scottish limited partnerships to reveal identity of owners thanks to new laws

- New laws will force Scottish limited partnerships to disclose ownership and control information
- Partnerships who fail to comply within 28 days will face fines
- Laws will help to improve transparency of partnerships and act as a deterrent against their use for criminal ends

Around 30,000 firms registered as Scottish limited partnerships will be forced to reveal their owners' identities under laws.

There have been allegations that some of these companies have been using these arrangements as vehicles of crime, with a 236% increase in the number of Scottish limited partnerships registered between March 2011 and March 2016.

Scottish Partnerships (Register of People with Significant Control) Regulations 2017, which come into force on Monday (26 June 2017), will bring

these firms into line with others in the UK, requiring them to disclose the identity of their beneficial owners within 28 days. If they fail to do so, these partnerships will face daily fines of up to £500.

UK government Business Minister Margot James said:

This government is committed to ensuring all businesses are run responsibly.

These new laws will help to improve transparency of Scottish limited partnerships and act as a deterrent against their use for criminal ends.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

These new laws are a sign of the UK government's commitment to transparency around Scottish limited partnerships.

Campaign groups and media activity have highlighted growing concerns that SLPs had the potential to be used for criminal activity, and by introducing stronger deterrents the UK government is encouraging transparency.

Separately, earlier this year the government launched a review into 'limited partnerships' across the country, with a particular focus on those registered in Scotland following allegations that some of these businesses are being used for criminal purposes.

Unlike those set up in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Scottish limited partnerships have their own 'legal personality', meaning they can hold assets, borrow money from banks and enter into contracts. A limited partnership is a particular type of business made up of a number of partners, who can be people or other business entities.

1. Scottish limited partnerships will need to provide information about the people or legal entities that have significant control.
 2. Guidance will be published alongside the regulations to help Scottish limited partnerships to establish who has significant control over them and to understand the detail of the new regulations.
 3. Information provided by Scottish limited partnerships will be available on the Companies House register.
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It is essential that the details of any agreement with the DUP are made public – John McDonnell

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, has today written to the Chancellor, Philip Hammond MP, calling on him to make public the cost of any secret deals the Government are making with the DUP.

Calling it "essential" that the details of any agreement are made public, the Shadow Chancellor lays out a number of questions that Hammond must answer around additional spending as well as the Barnett Formula implications of any potential deal.

Ends

Letter
from Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell MP to Chancellor Philip Hammond MP:

Dear
Chancellor

I
am writing to call on you, in the interests of transparency, to publish the financial consequences of any electoral deal reached between the Conservative Party and the Democratic Unionist Party.

There
has been speculation in the media about possible additional infrastructure and
NHS spending for Northern Ireland, or reductions in Northern Ireland rates of corporation tax, VAT and/or Air Passenger Duty.

It
is essential that the details of any agreement are made public, including any costing calculations and evidence for measures which are agreed, and how additional spending or reduced tax revenue will be affected by Barnett Formula
considerations.

Specifically,
will any additional spending or tax cuts offered to Northern Ireland be offset
through reductions in the Northern Ireland block grant and if not how will additional spending be paid for?

Can

you clarify whether any additional spending will be funded from general UK-wide taxation, or by increased borrowing, or by some other means?

Since

your Spring Budget there has already emerged a 'black hole' of £2bn as a result

of the Government's U-turn on increasing Class 4 National Insurance contributions. Can you inform us how you are planning to plug this gap: with further spending cuts, tax rises, or additional borrowing? I note that this comes in the context of Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts for an increase in Public Sector Net Borrowing this year.

I

look forward to receiving your reply,

John

McDonnell MP

Shadow Chancellor

[News story: Lord Ahmed welcomes conclusions of UN Human Rights Council](#)

This has been the first Human Rights Council (HRC) session since my appointment as Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister responsible for the Commonwealth and the United Nations. The UK will continue to work tirelessly to ensure it holds those responsible for the worst atrocities and violations to account, and will work with the other members of the HRC to address the worst global crises of our time and seek to strengthen safeguards and protections for the future. We are grateful to the High Commissioner for Human Rights and his Office for their tireless efforts to promote and protect human rights around the world.

At this session the UK has, once again, played a leading role on a number of pressing human rights issues, including the situations in Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine and Eritrea. I am delighted that the Foreign Secretary's new Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper, was able to represent the UK at the annual full day discussion on women's rights, and I was also pleased to see the adoption of resolutions dedicated to the advancement of women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment.

The human rights situation in Syria remains acute, as carefully detailed by the Commission of Inquiry. Attacks on civilians, obstruction of humanitarian aid, and forced displacement of civilians continue, in particular by the

Syrian regime. It is vital that the Human Rights Council continues to take a strong and unified stance on Syria. We therefore welcome the Resolution the Council has adopted and call upon all parties to ensure that the rights of all Syrian citizens are respected.

I welcome the resolution on the Democratic Republic of Congo which mandates the establishment of an international investigation into the violence in the Kasai region. The Council is right to be seriously concerned by serious human rights abuses and violations that continue to take place. It is important that an impartial investigation now takes place, to complement national efforts to determine responsibility for these dreadful acts. I trust that the authorities in DRC will grant the access to the investigation to ensure that those who bear responsibility will be brought to justice.

The UK welcomes the adoption of a renewed resolution on Ukraine. We remain seriously concerned by the human rights situation in eastern Ukraine and illegally annexed Crimea. It is crucial that this Council continues to discuss the detailed and objective reporting of the situation by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. This resolution will allow that to happen. I trust that the Russian de facto authorities will grant access to the High Commissioner and his Office so that they are able to undertake monitoring in illegally annexed Crimea, as called for in UN Resolution 71/205.

I thank the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea for her report to the Council. Of particular concern were the issues of indefinite national service and shortcomings in the rule of law, including widespread arbitrary detentions. I encourage the Eritrean Government to continue to build upon increased engagement with the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights and engage the international community more widely on progressing human rights issues. I also urge the government of Eritrea to fully implement its constitution, and deliver on its past commitment to work towards gender equality – ending Female Genital Mutilation and early and forced marriage.

The June session of the Human Rights Council traditionally has a strong focus on promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls, and – as demonstrated by the many and varied contributions to the full day session on women's rights. It is vital that all states continue to engage and work together if we are to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, including the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. This session's resolutions recognise the considerable discrimination that many women and girls continue to face and show how the international community must work together to tackle it. We must all continue work to eliminate violence against women and girls and end all harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage.

The Joint Statement expressing concern over democracy, governance and human rights in Maldives was an important step. I urge the Government of Maldives to engage constructively with the international community and to take steps that clearly demonstrate its commitment to freedom of assembly and expression, an independent judiciary and the protection of human rights

defenders. The UK, and the other governments that signed the joint statement, stand ready to help.

Migration remains one of the great challenges of our time. We recognise the positive contribution of migrants and at the same time reaffirm the rights of states to manage their borders. We continue to believe that managing migration and security and meeting human rights obligations are not mutually exclusive aims, and that there are possibilities for exchanging best practice which will help develop human rights compliance globally and protect migrants and refugees.

This session also saw the first report from the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, whose work the UK strongly supports, and a report from the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children. The UK Government is committed to working together with international partners to eliminate forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking by 2030, as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 8.7.

The Human Rights Council is a vital forum, enabling Member States to work together to support and uphold universal rights around the world. This session has, once again, displayed the importance of unity and solidarity in the face of adversity. Many of us have faced horrific terrorist attacks this year – with attacks in London, Manchester, Egypt, France, Belgium, Afghanistan and Iran in the last few weeks alone. Now, more than ever, we must all come together, regardless of faith, gender or race, and stand united against those who seek to divide us.