

Press release: Trustees of Ipswich Kurdish Islamic Cultural Centre breached their legal duties, regulator finds

The Charity Commission has today (23 March 2017) [published a report](#) of its statutory inquiry into the [Ipswich Kurdish Islamic Cultural Centre](#) (registered charity number 1149580) ('the charity'), concluding that there was misconduct and mismanagement in the charity's administration.

The report sets out multiple failings by the trustees and concludes that the charity's financial management was poor.

The inquiry, which began in November 2015, found that the trustees:

- made unauthorised salary payments to one trustee amounting to £1,360, even though the charity's governing document prohibits the employment of trustees
- provided a zero interest loan to 2 members of the local community totalling £20,000 which amounted to twice the size of the charity's 2015 income
- did not have a safeguarding policy in place despite the fact that the charity operates weekend classes for children

The report also criticises the trustees' approach to engaging with the Commission, saying that their conduct fell below that which the regulator and the public expect, including by initially failing to take prompt action to address concerns identified by the Commission before it opened the inquiry. Following the opening of the inquiry, and as reflected in the report, the Commission acknowledges improvements in the trustees' conduct.

As part of the inquiry, the Commission has made an order requiring the trustees to complete a number of actions to address the failings and regulatory concerns identified.

The report states that the regulator will take further regulatory action if the trustees fail to comply with the order within a stated timeframe.

Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:

Our inquiry into the Ipswich Kurdish Islamic Cultural Centre found serious problems and basic failures. As our core guidance, [The essential trustee](#), explains, trustees must comply with their charity's governing document and the law and must manage their charity's resources responsibly. That hasn't always happened at this charity, putting it at risk of not being able to carry out its

charitable purposes. I now hope the trustees take the necessary steps we have set out in our Order to improve the charity's governance in the future.

The [full report](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Ends

PR 21/17

Notes to editors

1. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
 2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
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[Global buyers get a taste of Wales in an effort to reach new markets post-Brexit](#)

As part of the Welsh Government's commitment to raise Wales' global profile as a first-class place to do business, it is hosting the largest ever showcase of Wales' food and drink industry. The event, being held in the Celtic Manor, brings together producers, buyers and food industry professionals.

The two-day TasteWales event is hosting over 50 buyers from countries across the globe, including the Far East, Middle East, North America and Europe, over 100 UK buyers and in excess of 100 Welsh producers.

The event has Meet the Buyer opportunities, where influential domestic and international buyers can meet with Welsh food and drink producers to explore the potential of working together and identify new trade channels.

It also boasts an Innovation Skills and Business Zone where attendees will have the opportunity to see new developments and learn more about the support available for businesses in the sector.

Food and drink is already one of Wales' largest sectors, employing over 223,000 people and worth over £17bn to the Welsh economy annually.

Exports for the sector have grown by 95% in the past decade and continue to

grow, up 13% in the first six months of 2016 compared to the same time in 2015.

Speaking ahead of TasteWales, the Economy Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“We are extremely proud of our high-quality food and drink and recognise the enormous value it brings to our economy. Food and drink is a priority sector for the Welsh Government and this is why we have set an ambitious target to grow the sector by 30% by 2020.

“Food and drink exports have grown considerably and I am keen to see this continue. There are challenging times ahead as we navigate towards a future outside of the EU, particularly given almost 90% of our food and drink exports go to the EU. We continue to call for full and unfettered access to the single market, a request which has been replicated in discussions with representatives of the industry.

“However, in light of the UK’s decision to leave the EU, it is now more important than ever we promote the very best the food and drink industry has to offer and continue to make an impact in global markets. Today’s event is part of our response to overcoming future challenges and provides an exciting opportunity for Welsh producers to strike new deals with some impressive and influential buyers.”

[World Meteorological Day celebrates importance of clouds for weather, climate and water](#)

23 March 2017 – Clouds inspire art and thought, but few natural phenomena are as important to weather, climate or water, the United Nations meteorological agency today said, launching a digital cloud atlas to celebrate World Meteorological Day.

“If we want to forecast weather we have to understand clouds. If we want to model the climate system we have to understand clouds. And if we want to predict the availability of water resources, we have to understand clouds,” said World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Secretary-General Petteri Taalas.

World Meteorological Day commemorates the coming into force on 23 March 1950 of the convention establishing the WMO. This year’s theme is

Understanding Clouds.

In conjunction with the Day, WMO today launched for the first time a primarily on-line digital edition of the International Cloud Atlas, which features hundreds of images and information about clouds, as well as meteorological marvels, such as rainbows and halos.

The new Atlas combines 19th century traditions with 21st century technology, the UN agency said, noting that the International Cloud Atlas was first published some 200 years ago.

It contains pictures, definitions, and explanations that are accepted and used by all of WMO's 191 members, as well as all types of measurements from space and through remote sensing.

For example, the Atlas includes *volutus*, a roll cloud; clouds from human activities such as the contrail, a vapour trail sometimes produced by airplanes; and *asperitas*, a dramatic undulated cloud which captured the public imagination, according to WMO.

In his message for the Day, Mr. Taalas noted the importance of understanding weather and climate changes in protecting people and property, and assisting communities to become more resilient.

HQs flocked to Beijing in 2016

Wanda Plaza in Beijing. [Photo/China.org.cn]

The number of headquarters of enterprises in Beijing stood at 4,006 at the end of 2016 with a net growth of 70.

A headquarter economy is mutually beneficial for both Beijing and enterprises. The latest data shows that from January to November 2016, the assets of HQs accounted for 74.2 percent of the city's total; operation revenues 71.6 percent; and profits 89.8 percent. All the three figures are much higher than those of 2015.

Beijing enjoys many advantages as China's political, economic, cultural and talent center, and lots of important businesses open here, said Alibaba Group President Jin Jianhang.

In the next few years, Alibaba will set up research and development bases for information technology sectors such as cloud computing, big data and the mobile internet in Beijing. Beijing will also become the operating base for innovative industries in the fields of health, film, music and others.

Cooperation between the government and enterprises has generated many benefits. For example, after becoming the top sponsor of the International

Olympic Committee earlier this year, Alibaba has been promoting winter sports in Beijing. Internet company AutoNavi is working with Beijing Municipal Commission of Transport and Beijing Traffic Management Bureau to ease congestion through the “internet plus geographic information” approach.

[FEATURE: Humanity at the core as UN readies for first-ever Ocean Conference](#)

22 March 2017 – Over a year ago, on 20 February 2016, Tropical Cyclone Winston made a category 5 landfall along the north coast of Fiji’s largest, most populous island, Viti Levu, killing at least 44 people, and grounding flights to and from the Pacific Island nation.

“It was one of the strongest cyclones to have hit any country in the Southern Hemisphere,” recalls Mr. Semi Koroilavesau, Fijian Minister for Fisheries. “That was quite catastrophic for Fiji and we are still recovering from it,” he adds, sombrely.

Mr. Koroilavesau was speaking recently at a panel discussion on the margins of the first preparatory meeting – convened by the President of the United Nations General Assembly at the UN Headquarters in New York – for the first-ever UN Ocean Conference, to be co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden, from 5 June to 9 June 2017.

“Our ocean is warming up and changing the pattern of our main product, which is tuna,” said Mr. Koroilavesau underlining the significance of the ocean to the Fijian people.

“The migratory pattern has changed because of the conditions of the water. The degradation of the water is also depleting our resources and creating a lot of havoc in our ocean,” he told the high-level panel, which included Peter Thomson, President of the UN General Assembly, Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, and Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General and head of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

“Fiji has about 320 islands. Ocean is quite an important item to us both in our daily lives and... also as transportation between the islands,” said Mr. Koroilavesau.



A fisherman in Grenada hauls his net ashore hoping to catch fish from the Caribbean Sea. Photo: UNEP/ Kadir van Lohuizen / NOOR

In the run-up to the June Conference, four themes will shape the focus of the preparations that, according to the President of the UN General Assembly, “will lay the foundations upon which the Oceans Conference will stand.”

“Our efforts at this time and in the years ahead, will determine whether our children, and those who come after them, will know the joy and the sustenance of the oceans bounty that was provided to us in our youth. Let’s not deny them that bounty,” Mr. Thomson had said earlier, in a message that resonated strongly with the theme for the month of February, which is *People and Oceans*, with a focus on livelihoods, tourism, food security, maritime transport and trade.

“Whether you look at the declining fish stocks that are reaching a tipping point, or the ocean acidification level or whether you look at the level of plastics in our oceans, I think any sensible person can conclude that time is running out fast and we need to take action fast,” said Mr. Thomson, during the preparatory meeting.

SDG14 and the whole development agenda

Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo underlined the nexus between oceans and people, especially in the context of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, which has to do with conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

“When we talk about SDG 14, we are thinking about navigation in the sea, we think about catching fish in the sea for food, we are thinking about doing tourism, but that is not all. Health of the sea and sustainable use of marine resources have a direct impact in the implementation of the many SDGs,” noted Mr. Wu, calling for voluntary commitments to implement Goal 14.

VIDEO: Ahead of the UN Ocean Conference in June 2017, UN chief of Economic and Social Affairs, Wu Hongbo says the Conference will be a ‘game changer’ and a chance for the international community to raise awareness about the importance of the oceans.

Noting that SDG 14 is one of the vanguards for the whole Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, Mr. Wu also makes the connection between oceans and the goal to eliminate hunger. “We are actually receiving a lot of nutrition and the food from the sea so we have to protect the sea,” said Mr. Wu.

Besides food and nutrition, Mr. Wu pointed out the significant contribution of the ocean to people’s overall wellbeing and in mitigating the effects of climate change.

“The ocean and the sea are the natural regulator of our climate and they are good for sanitation,” noted the UN Under-Secretary-General. “People are saying that the oceans sink one third of greenhouse gas emission. If we lose the sea and oceans, just imagine what kind of situation we are going to have,” warned Mr. Wu, who also made a connection between oceans, employment and economic growth.

“I think the best or sustainable use of marine resources would really have a big boost to the economic growth and create a lot of jobs,” said Mr. Wu.



Residents of Taveuni island in Fiji helping to unload food rations that were delivered to affected villages in the south of the island. The southern part of Taveuni Island is among areas that were most affected by Cyclone Winston. Some villages were completely destroyed and people were left without food for about a week, as access to the island was cut. After the runway and roads were cleared, people in affected villages started to receive food rations, but most of them were still in shock after they lost everything they had. Photo: UNICEF/ Sokhin

Transformative commitments to drive Conference outcomes

The outcomes of the Oceans Conference will, according to the President of the UN General Assembly, include a call to action and a conference report that will constitute the global body’s work plan for implementing the SDG 14.

“We must keep our vision clear. We must universalise our efforts. We must maintain the momentum towards the transformative commitments that will emerge from the Oceans Conference in June,” underscored Mr. Thomson during the first preparatory meeting.

Mr. Thomson places particular significance to the outcomes of the Ocean Conference which, he noted, would constitute “a turning point in history.”

“This is the opportunity for any human being to be a part of the recovery of the ocean. For any human being who cares about the health of the ocean,” said Mr. Thomson, during the meeting.

Sweden’s Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin sees the Ocean Conference as an opportunity to “share experiences, share best practices,” she told the high-level panel. “This Ocean Conference will be the hub where we can actually share this knowledge, also transfer technology, and support developing countries so they will have access and the capacity to share the way that is needed for the oceans because the oceans connect us all,” she said.

VIDEO: In preparation for June’s Ocean Conference that aims to help safeguard the planet’s oceans, UN General Assembly President said it’s time to ‘take action fast’ and the June conference will be a ‘turning point’ in history for protecting the ocean.

Ms. Lövin also expressed concerns about unsustainable exploitation of ocean resources and pollution, warning, “If these trends continue, with the overfishing, with more and more plastic pollution in our oceans, we will have more plastics than fish in our oceans by 2050.”

Like her fellow panellists, she made an urgent call to action. “It’s really,

really serious so this is what we have to do now in order to leave our planet with good conscious to our children and grandchildren," she said, adding, "We need to take action now and we can do it. We don't have any excuses for not doing it."

The UN has called for voluntary commitments to implement Goal 14 and established an online commitment registry. The voluntary commitments, according to Under-Secretary-General Wu, "underscore the urgency for action and for solutions."

Other themes in focus every month ahead of the Ocean conference include: Ocean Pollution (marine litter, land-based water pollutants, shipping waste, oil spills); Marine Biodiversity (overfishing, marine habitat loss, species loss); and Oceans and Climate Change (sea-level rise, ocean warming, ocean acidification, coral bleaching).

VIDEO: Ahead of the first-ever UN conference on oceans, Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin says the international community should share knowledge, technology and support developing countries on issues related to oceans.