

UK Support to Summit for Democracy

The UK welcomed the Summit for Democracy as a vital opportunity to work with allies and partners to build back better - promoting a world where vibrant democracies don't just survive but thrive.

Through the forum of the Summit and Year of Action, we will continue to work closely with partners to drive international ambition and look forward to building on our strong record of championing human rights, standing up to authoritarian states and tackling corruption and illicit finance.

Against the backdrop of increasing systemic international competition, the UK will be leading efforts to advance the Network of Liberty that promotes freedom and democracy. This will include stronger economic and security partnerships with allies and partner countries, which are essential in countering instability, conflict, extremist ideologies and transnational challenges which can make democracy vulnerable. The Network will involve developing alliances centred on security, investment, and trade as a means to challenge authoritarianism in all its guises and demonstrate that democracy delivers best for citizens.

These efforts will build on our work to take forward the strategic objectives of the UK Integrated Review, and the Open Societies and Anti-Corruption commitments under our Presidency of the G7. This includes the G7 Partnership for Infrastructure and Investment, British International Investment (BII) and the UK's Clean Green Initiative which will help narrow the infrastructure investment gap in developing economies by supporting quality and sustainable infrastructure through a country-led and values-based approach, underpinned by strong standards.

Being open also requires us to be secure at home: protecting our people, our homeland and our democracy is the first duty of any government. Our international efforts are therefore underpinned by extensive domestic action to advance our vision for UK democracy at home - a system that is modern, secure, inclusive, transparent, and fair.

The UK will build on these international and domestic work programmes throughout the Year of Action and announce further commitments at Summit 2. Over the next year the UK will look to:

- a. **Security partnerships:** Reinforce our Armed Forces' global engagement, through which we support security and stability in key regions where authoritarian influence is rising.

- b. **Technology:** Bolster our growing network of digital and tech dialogues and partnerships to agree global norms in cyberspace and collaborate on critical and emerging technologies. We will make use of our leadership on cyber governance at the G7 and our support to the US initiative on the future of the internet. We will develop our UK-US partnerships in cyber, digital and technology, and further our international development offer on inclusive, responsible, and sustainable digital transformation.

- c. **Trade, infrastructure, and investment:** Develop our engagement with like-minded countries in using infrastructure and investment through British International Investment (BII) and the UK's Clean Green Initiative, and the G7 Partnership for Infrastructure and Investment to support low and middle-income countries to build back better, and greener from the pandemic. We will also promote honest, reliable finance, better practices, and greater transparency, including through driving a race to the top on infrastructure standards.

A. Fighting Corruption

1. Economic crime and corporate transparency

The UK will set out reforms of Companies House, limited partnerships law and a register of overseas entities owning property in the UK to safeguard our democratic processes and institutions from those who would do us harm. The UK will:

- Set out the details of new powers for Companies House to tackle the exploitation of UK corporate vehicles by criminals, supported by an investment of £63m over three years in the capability of Companies House to deliver on these new powers.
- Focus its attention on:
 - Strengthening law enforcement powers to identify the proceeds of crime focussing on Unexplained Wealth Order powers enabling the recovery of more illicit crypto-assets; and improving information sharing with and by Anti-Money Laundering (AML) regulated entities.
 - Increasing transparency over the purchase of real estate by overseas legal entities.

2. Technical assistance and capacity building

The UK intends to strengthen its ability to support international partners to tackle corruption and illicit finance, leveraging UK expertise, by:

- Establishing a new International Centre of Excellence on Anti-Corruption and Illicit Finance (ICE) to provide evidence-based assessments of international illicit finance, and rapid access to financial, sectoral, and geographical expertise for analysis and short-term deployment
- Strengthening an ODA-funded technical assistance unit, established within HM Treasury in February 2021, that is supporting developing countries to tackle corruption and illicit finance through capacity building, in line with international standards

3. Asset Recovery Transparency

- The UK will strengthen its capability in asset return through the publication of a domestic Framework for Transparent and Accountable Asset Return, which will outline our policy on international asset returns, and the continued publication of the UK asset return statistical bulletin.

4. Anti-Corruption Strategy

- The UK will develop a new Anti-Corruption Strategy, as recommended by the Boardman Review into the use of Supply Chain Finance in Government, to better tackle corruption and uphold private and public integrity.

5. UK Magnitsky sanctions

- In April 2021, the UK launched a *Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions* regime, pursuant to which the UK had designated 27 individuals involved in serious corruption globally by the end of 2021. The UK will impose Anti-Corruption sanctions during the Year of Action, pursuing those involved in serious corruption in close coordination with our international partners who have already established these powers, such as the US and Canada, while supporting other partners in a global alliance of democracies to develop similar capability.
- Targeted UK sanctions can also be used to deter and provide accountability for serious human rights violations and abuses in co-ordination with partners. The UK made designations on UN International Human Rights Day 2021 and the final day of Summit 1. The UK will continue to use the *Global Human Rights Sanctions* regime to hold to account individuals and entities involved in serious human rights violations or abuses across the Year of Action.

6. Public Procurement

The UK will implement wide-ranging plans to transform UK government public procurement procedures and systems.

- Including features such as end-to-end digital transparency and open data, aligned with the Open Contracting Data Standard, unique identifiers for all government contracts, and the deployment of a single user-friendly and accurate automated portal covering UK government public contracting.

B. Defending Against Authoritarianism

1. Security Partnerships

- UK armed forces will support our allies and partners to maintain stability and freedoms in key regions and minimise opportunities for other actors to undermine international security and values. We will:
 - Build a larger cadre of permanently deployed personnel, delivering defence diplomacy around the globe; and expand our global network by a third, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific and Europe, delivering deeper regional partnerships that support democracies.

- Increase our capacity building and training across the Indo-Pacific, delivered through longer and more consistent military deployments and by better leveraging our existing regional facilities; maximising regional engagement through AUKUS; increasing our maritime presence; and building a new British Defence Staff in Canberra to work alongside the existing Defence Staff in Singapore and coordinate Defence activity across the region.
- Counter and deny state threats, ensuring that the UK's potential adversaries are not able to manipulate the security environment – using a mixture of operational activity, strategic communication, and engagement.
- Undertake persistent engagement activities in NATO's near and far geographic regions, delivering upstream prevention of instability and terror threats.
- Support UN peacekeeping operations as part of the Government's effort to reduce the frequency and incidence of conflict.

2. Building back better

- Through its Clean Green Initiative, the UK will help developing countries take advantage of green technology and grow their economies, by providing honest and reliable financing that avoids countries being left with unsustainable debt. In line with G7 commitments, the UK will also drive efforts to narrow the infrastructure investment gap in developing economies, including through a package of UK-backed investment and expertise. This aims to mobilise up to £8 billion a year of public and private sector investment by 2025 to finance projects in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. This will boost economic, development and security ties, united by a commitment to common principles and high standards.
- As a global leader in financial services regulation and standards, the UK will support market regulators in developing countries to cope with rapidly digitalising economies by pooling expertise and sharing knowledge to develop new open standard frameworks on which they can draw to boost financial inclusion, consumer protection and economic growth.
- The UK will increase financial support for transparency in construction procurement through the Construction Sector Transparency (CoST) initiative. CoST, the leading global infrastructure transparency initiative incentivises more efficient and accountable use of public finance for infrastructure, supporting open and competitive procurement and enabling journalists and civil societies to hold governments to account. We will work with other partners to put CoST onto a sustainable footing.

3. Trade pacts that support free enterprise democracies

- The UK will promote greater free and fair trade, establishing ourselves at the centre of a modern, progressive network of free trade agreements (FTAs) and economic partnerships. Our FTAs – including with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) – will set high standards of openness and accountability with like-minded open economies, seek robust measures to prevent and combat corruption risks, and anchor our partner countries more firmly in the multilateral and Rules Based International System, and promote transparency (and therefore accountability).
- The UK's Economic Partnership Agreements and planned new Developing Country Trading Scheme will provide African and other developing countries with increased opportunities to make the UK their trade partner of choice.
- Through the establishment of our Trade Centre of Excellence and other programmes, we will build the capacity (and transparency) of key institutions in partner developing countries, for example in public procurement and trade facilitation, which are highly prone to corruption.

4. Technology for democracy

- We will build on the international principles on telecoms diversification. These principles pledge to work with governments that share democratic values and a commitment to secure communications, to develop open and interoperable telecoms networks, underpinned by a more secure, transparent, and reliable infrastructure. The UK is committed to a secure and diverse telecoms market for all democracies, including with 5G and 6G technology.
- We will reaffirm UK commitment to Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance that encourages innovation, investment, protects the public, and safeguards our fundamental values, while working with global partners to promote the responsible development of AI internationally. Building on the recently published UK national AI Strategy, we will set out plans for:
 - A White Paper on a pro-innovation position on governing and regulating AI.
 - An AI Standards Hub to coordinate UK engagement in AI standardisation globally.
 - Implementation of the US-UK Declaration on Cooperation in AI research and development.
- We will also work with international partners to agree global norms and standards in emerging technologies including blockchain, quantum and

biotechnology to provide economic opportunities for all, challenge the influence of malign actors and reduce the likelihood of misuse.

- The G7 Digital and Technology Ministerial Declaration recognised the need for data free flow with trust with ability to move data across borders essential for economic growth and innovation. We will encourage the unlocking of the power of data in our economies and our societies, while continuing to address challenges related to privacy, data protection, intellectual property rights, and security. We will work with partners together to better leverage the potential of valuable data-driven technologies, promote international cooperation to drive benefits for our economies and societies, and ensure personal data are appropriately protected, while recognising our varied approaches to data governance. In order to support this, at the Summit for Democracy the Digital Secretary will announce a joint UK/US Prize Challenge on Privacy Enhancing Technologies (PETs), which will help to drive value from data through innovation and data sharing whilst preserving privacy or confidentiality.
- We will champion the importance of open, inclusive, responsible data as the cornerstone of our decision making action and accountability. We are committed to the Inclusive Data Charter which promotes the importance of inclusive data to ensure that no one is left behind.

5. Strengthening international trust in democracy

- The UK will lead an unprecedented global effort to understand post-pandemic trust in democracy. This will enable like-minded international partners to develop evidence-based approaches to strengthening and defending inclusive democratic systems:
 - The UK will build a high capability, global integrated data platform to deliver critical insight and data on trust and support for democracy, providing a world-leading resource for policymakers and communicators to monitor issues, design evidence-based interventions, and develop shared approaches. This platform can also support other UK deliverables, through the provision of actionable data and insight.
 - The UK will work with partners to develop a global academic coalition to develop a shared research agenda on post-pandemic trust in democracy and inclusive democratic systems, supporting the international build-back-better agenda.
 - Through the coalition, and the platform as a tool, this programme will establish a multilateral forum with partners to share knowledge, actions, and work collaboratively to secure citizen trust in and engagement with democracy in the future.

6. Domestic action to protect UK democracy

- Our international action is underpinned by extensive commitments at home to promote our vision for UK democracy - a system that is modern, secure, inclusive, transparent, and fair. Promoting and defending a thriving democracy requires a whole-of-government approach.
- We are bringing forward a range of measures to strengthen democracy and resilience through legislation on Elections, Online Safety, and Counter State Threats; enhancing security measures around UK elections; driving a world-leading project on trust in democracy; tackling disinformation and promoting media literacy.
- We will bring forward an ambitious package of legislation and wide-ranging reforms to strengthen UK democratic resilience and defend us from those seeking to do harm:
 - Introducing domestic elections legislation to strengthen the integrity of UK elections, and update our elections law to ensure that our democracy remains secure, modern, transparent and fair.
 - Enhancing our security measures around UK electoral processes, including countering disinformation.
 - Reinvigorating our engagement across international partnerships to protect our democratic processes, including sharing best practice with like minded partners on approaches to countering disinformation.
 - Introducing new Counter State Threats legislation to provide the security services and law enforcement agencies with the tools they need (including new offences) to disrupt state threats.

7. Domestic action to strengthen democratic transparency and integrity

- The Committee on Standards in Public Life has completed a review of the standards landscape across Government and set out a number of recommendations for the Government to consider. The Government also commissioned a review into the use of supply chain finance (and associated schemes) in Government which made recommendations about lobbying and management of outside interests within the Civil Service. We will draw on these to ensure that integrity systems within government are fit for purpose.
- Reviewing and improving the operation of the 'business appointment rules' to prevent inappropriate use of information and contacts in employment following leaving government roles and increasing transparency in procurement.

- Undertaking post-legislative scrutiny of Part 1 of the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 (“the Lobbying Act”).

8. Domestic action on Media Freedom, Sustainability and Literacy

We will bring forward a suite of domestic activity in the UK to:

- Build user resilience to mis- and disinformation through the development of strong information literacy skills, empowering users to: think critically about the content they consume online, understand the news gathering process, and understand the role of journalism, information, and news in democracy. This will have an amplified focus on vulnerable groups.
- Promote the development and uptake of literacy by design provisions (e.g. prompts to check the source of information) by online platforms to support all users to think critically online, better identify mis- and disinformation and bias, and understand how to respond appropriately to mis- and disinformation.
- Consider options for a package of government support towards the sustainability and freedom of the domestic press sector, which would build on recent and planned measures including a government-press advertising partnership, the National Committee and the Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists and action in digital markets.

C. Advancing Human Rights

1. Freedom of Religion or Belief (FORB)

- We will deliver an international conference on FORB in July 2022, to share best practice and encourage reform in other countries. We will also continue to support the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance (IRFBA) in 2022 and work to encourage non-Western countries to join and sign up to its principles.
- We will deliver a set of recommendations (The Bishop of Truro’s Review) by July 2022 to strengthen the UK’s domestic and international commitments to FORB and ensure that violations of FORB are captured in our annual human rights report.

2. Gender equality, including Conflict Related Sexual Violence

- The UK will continue to work with G7 partners to take forward a gender equality monitoring and accountability mechanism, to track progress towards gender equality commitments.

- The UK will step up ambition to tackle sexual violence in conflict. We condemn the use of sexual violence and rape as weapons of war as a 'red line' akin to chemical weapons. We will strengthen the international response and build a new consensus to prevent these atrocities, exploring all options for further international action, including a new international convention. We will support survivors, hold the perpetrators to account and put an end to these heinous acts.

3. Domestic action on Online Safety

The UK will introduce legislation on online safety to:

- Protect all users, and particularly children, from harmful or inappropriate content.
- Ensure that the largest platforms are clear about what content is acceptable on their services and enforce the rules consistently. For example, they will need to stop the intolerable level of racist abuse, and abuse of women on their platforms.
- Tackle criminal activity, so there is less illegal content online, such as terrorist material or child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Protect users from harms while enshrining in law safeguards for free speech and the invaluable role of the free press, with additional protections for democratic and journalistic content.