**Joint Ministerial Council Communiqué Commitments 2015: United Kingdom Progress Report**

*The UK and Overseas Territories Governments made a number of commitments to action in the Joint Communiqué issued after the Joint Ministerial Council in December 2015. This report summarises work undertaken by the UK Government to carry out those commitments.*

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| **Commitments** | **Action** |
| 1. The United Kingdom Government to liaise with UK banks to ensure that Overseas Territories (OTs) have full access to banking services. | HM Treasury has engaged with a number of Overseas Territories on correspondent banking.  Following discussions with HMT in March 2016, the Government of Montserrat has worked directly with the Government of Gibraltar to secure correspondent banking services from The Gibraltar International Bank Ltd. |
| 1. United Kingdom Government to expedite infrastructure development in the Overseas Territories and ensure that priority infrastructure needs continue to be monitored, addressed and supported where appropriate. | Support for Territories’ sustainable economic development is a priority for the new cross- Whitehall OT Regional Board and OT Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) funding. Scoping projects are being taken forward in Ascension and Anguilla, funded through the CSSF. The Department for International Development (DfID) continues to support economic development and infrastructure needs in the ODA- eligible OTs. |
| 1. Joint work to explore financing solutions to improve infrastructure. |
| 1. Joint work to ensure procurement processes in the Overseas Territories is in line with international standards. | The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has directly engaged with a number of OTs (including Cayman, Bermuda and British Virgin Islands) on supporting open procurement for new infrastructure projects. |
| 1. Overseas Territories to be early adopters of the new OECD global standard on tax transparency, with first exchange of data taking place in 2017. | All the OTs are on track to implement the new standard from next year. |
| 1. Overseas Territories to hold beneficial ownership information in our respective jurisdictions via central registers or similarly effective systems. | All OTs with significant financial services industries have made a commitment to establishing central registers or similarly effective systems by June 2017 through an exchange of notes with the UK. |
| 1. Joint work to extend the core UN Human Rights Conventions to the OTs, where these have not been extended already. | Anguilla is finalising transposition tables for the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and International Convention on Economical, Social and Civil Rights (ICESCR). The Convention on the Elimination on all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has been extended to Anguilla and the Cayman Islands in March. Pitcairn and the St Helena grouping requested extension in May and July respectively. The Department for Education and FCO) engaged with HM Government of Gibraltar to discuss the United Nations Convention Rights of the Child. |
| 1. UKG to ensure that pending treaty extension requests from the OTs are taken forward as soon as possible. | Requests from Pitcairn and St Helena for The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) are in train. The Government Equalities Office (GEO) is awaiting information from Bermuda and Gibraltar on extension of CEDAW. A request for the extension of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) to the Cayman Islands is also in progress. |
| 1. Support for capacity building and development of expertise in the following core areas: 2. Public financial management & economic planning: maintaining sound public finances, building economic resilience and ensuring value for money in use of public funds, including through effective use of audit; | Support for public financial management in the OTs is a priority for the new cross-Whitehall OT Regional Board and OT Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) funding. Work to embed the National Audit Office principles-based model is being developed in consultation with Territory governments. |
| 1. Create a meaningful culture of ethics, integrity & transparency, including through Codes of Conduct for Ministers and civil servants where these are not already in place; | Action is primarily for Overseas Territory Governments.  Support for governance and public sector reform in the OTs is a priority for the new cross Whitehall OT Regional Board and OT Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) funding. A Programme details are being developed in consultation with OT governments. A Criminal Justice Advisor is in place for the Caribbean OTs. A programme of law enforcement and security support is being developed. |
| 1. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law: building strong and effective institutions that promote democracy, human rights, the rule of law and deliver access to justice; and |
| 1. Security and anti-corruption: upholding Territories’ security and enhancing their reputation as sound jurisdictions for business, including through continued support for international efforts against bribery and corruption and fraud. |
| 1. Joint work to update and simplify extradition processes between the OTs and the UK and between the OTs and third countries. | An Order was passed by the Privy Council in October 2016. |
| 1. UKG to develop disaster response capacity in the Territories | Support for Territories’ disaster management capacity is a priority for the new cross Whitehall OT Regional Board and OT Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) funding. Programme details are being developed in consultation with OT governments. |
| 1. Joint work to tackle serious and organized crime, and reducing reoffending in the Territories. | Support for Territories’ law enforcement capacity is a priority for the new cross Whitehall OT Regional Board and OT Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) funding. Programme details are being developed in consultation with OT governments. |
| 1. UKG to work with those OTs where they represent their own interests at international fora. | The previous Prime Minister committed in Parliament to engage the Devolved Administrations, Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies ahead of EU negotiations in accordance with their various Constitutional relationships with the UK. |
| 1. UKG to continue to consult OTs for their views on EU can be taken into account. |
| 1. Joint work to realize the full benefits of the Overseas Association. |
| 1. OT governments to lead a national response, demonstrating clear leadership and accountability, to ensure a child-centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding based on multi-agency working, information sharing & robust risk assessment. | FCO has engaged with OT governments to support and develop their national safeguarding systems, including multi-agency working and child safeguarding boards. Capabilities in St Helena have been strengthened following the Wass enquiry. |
| 1. Joint work towards a Territory-led road map and Memorandum of Understanding. | The Falkland Islands developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote more effective collaboration between the OTs for the safeguarding of children. |
| 1. Child Safeguarding Assessments in all of the inhabited Overseas Territories by the end of 2016, noting that some of these had already been held while others were being planned. | Action is primarily for Overseas Territories. The FCO and British Virgin Islands piloted a new Child Safeguarding agreement by the Chief Social Worker for England and Wales. The United Kingdom Government hosted the first child safeguarding conference for Directors of children’s services. |
| 1. Joint work to progressively implement the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). | *See no. 7.* |
| 1. Joint work to explore how to make the quota system work more effectively. | The Department of Health (DH) is undertaking a review of the current quota process and how it could work more effectively. Questionnaires have been sent out to the relevant Overseas Territories to identify issues. DH is aware that some Overseas Territories are still requesting a review of the quota places. |
| 1. Joint work to explore inter-Territory healthcare in regional centres of excellence & to support the development & implementation of common monitoring systems for audit & review of healthcare across OTs. | The Department of Health met the UK Overseas Territories Association (UKOTA) in July and agreed that action will be taken forward by the Overseas Territories themselves; UKOTA would arrange an inter-territory meeting and invite DH to observe. |
| 1. UKG to explore greater use of telemedicine and what technical assistance can be provided to the OTs (Paragraph 26/plenary). | The Department of Health has met OT representatives to discuss this issue. An introductory teleconference on telemedicine between Overseas Territories and NHS Scotland was held in September 2016. A public health project is being designed by Public Health England, funded by the OT Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, to provide technical assistance on 1) implementation of the International Health Regulations 2) disaster preparedness and response and 3) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control compliance. |
| 1. Joint work to promote and enable up-skilling of healthcare clinicians in the OTs to UK level qualifications through the local delivery of tertiary-level through distance learning, supplemented with UK-based clinical placements. | The Department of Health has started evaluating learning opportunities that are, or could be, available to OT healthcare clinicians with Health Education England. |
| 1. UKG to consider OT request for inclusion in the procurement of medicines and vaccines. | The Public Health England procurement pilot in St Helena had proven successful and is now nearing a point where it will be evaluated, with the possibility of extension to other OTs. |
| 1. UKG to consider OT request to up-rate pensions for UK state pension holders residing in the OTs. | The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has indicated that there will be no change to the existing policy on the up-rating of UK state pensions. |
| 1. UKG to provide advice/guidance to those OTs interested in modernising their domestic pension systems. | DWP has offered advice and guidance to the OTs on modernising their pensions systems as required. |
| 1. Joint work to support greater engagement with other international sporting bodies. | This remains an ongoing commitment. DCMS will review any request for advice or support from an OT to become members of an international sporting federation. |
| 1. Joint work to promote and facilitate renewable energy and energy efficiency, and to address the challenges of energy security and climate change mitigation. | Support for Territories’ economic development and prosperity is a priority for the new cross Whitehall OT Regional Board and OT Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) funding. Programmes to support Territories’ environmental strategies are being developed in consultation with OT governments.  BEIS (then DECC) discussed the upcoming work programme of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) with OTs in early 2016 and shared feedback with IRENA. |
| 1. Joint work with UK agencies to better understand risks posed by climate change to our environment, communities and economies. | DFID commissioned a project with the UK Meteorological Office to assess climate change and its likely impact on selected UK Overseas Territories. DFID are now reflecting the recommendations of the Meteorological Office’s report in the development of future plans and projects; in particular, those relating to infrastructure development. |
| 1. Joint work to enhance the management of the marine ecosystem alongside local traditions and sustainable marine usage across the OTs | A no-take Marine Protected Area (MPA) has been designated around the Pitcairn Islands and a sustainable use MPA around St Helena. Commitments have been made to designate a MPA around Ascension Island by 2019 and for Tristan da Cunha to establish a regime for protecting the waters across its entire maritime zone by 2020. This will more than double the protected ocean around the OTs to an area of around 4 million square kilometres by 2020, supported by UK funding for surveillance and enforcement. Other OTs are engaged in ongoing work to improve the management and protection of their marine environments, with UK support available through the CSSF Blue Belt programme. |