

## Debate Pack

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# UK sanctions for human rights abuses and corruption

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# 1 Summary

A Backbench Business Committee debate on UK Government's sanctions on human rights and corruption is scheduled for Thursday 21 July 2022 in the House of Commons chamber.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 UK Sanctions Powers: Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018

The [Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#) provides the legal basis for taking sanctions within the UK. This includes the global human rights regime and the global anti-money laundering regime.

#### Purpose of sanctions

Under the [Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#) (the Sanctions Act), an appropriate Minister may adopt Regulations to impose sanctions where they consider that doing so would be appropriate to comply with an obligation under the United Nations Charter, another international obligation, or for one of the following purposes, where the sanctions regulations would:

- further the prevention of terrorism, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere,
- be in the interests of national security,
- be in the interests of international peace and security,
- further a foreign policy objective of the government of the United Kingdom,
- promote the resolution of armed conflicts or the protection of civilians in conflict zones,
- provide accountability for or be a deterrent to gross violations of human rights, or otherwise promote—
  - compliance with international human rights law, or
  - respect for human rights,
- promote compliance with international humanitarian law,
- contribute to multilateral efforts to prevent the spread and use of weapons and materials of mass destruction, or
- promote respect for democracy, the rule of law and good governance.

## Types of sanctions

The Act enables the UK to impose different types of sanction allowed under this regime, including:

- trade sanctions, including arms embargoes and other trade restrictions
- financial sanctions, including asset freezes
- immigration sanctions, known as travel bans
- aircraft and shipping sanctions, including de-registering or controlling the movement of aircraft and ships
- other sanctions for purposes of implementing UN obligations.<sup>1</sup>

The power to make regulations under Part 1 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 is conferred on an “appropriate Minister”. Section 1(9)(a) of that Act defines an “appropriate Minister” as including the Secretary of State.

## 2.2

## UK Sanctions Regimes

Under the powers provided for in the [Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#), the Government has established a number of different sanctions regimes. All sanctions regimes are included on the Government website, including [thematic and country-specific regimes](#).

Thematic sanctions regimes include:

- [The cyber sanctions regime](#)
- [The chemical weapons sanctions regime](#)
- [The global anti-corruption sanctions regime](#)
- [The global human rights sanctions regime](#)
- [The ISIL \(Da’esh\) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime](#)
- [The domestic counter-terrorism sanctions regime](#)
- [The international counter-terrorism sanctions regime](#)
- [The unauthorised drilling activities sanctions regime](#)

Sanctions designations from all UK Sanctions Regimes are added to the [UK Sanctions List](#). The UK Sanctions List is also searchable via [HM Treasury’s Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation](#).

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<sup>1</sup> See further, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, [Sanctions Regulations Report on Annual Reviews 2021](#), 13 January 2022 p6

Other Statutory Instruments can be found by [searching for all SIs adopted under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#) on the Parliament website.

## 2.3

### Procedures for imposing sanctions

Each of the individual sanctions regimes may have their own designation criteria for listing individuals and entities. But these criteria must be in line with the minimum requirements set out in the [Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#). There are two relevant considerations:

- the powers to establish sanctions regulations, and
- the powers to designate individuals or entities to the UK Sanctions List.

Existing sanctions regulations are now also subject to amendments made by the [Economic Crime \(Transparency and Enforcement\) Act 2022](#), which retrospectively changes the effect of the designation criteria for pre-existing sanctions regimes.

#### **Summary of changes from the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022**

Changes under the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022, amended existing legislation on the enforcement of UK sanctions to:

- remove the requirement that people must have known or suspected they breached sanctions law to receive a monetary penalty for such breaches;
- remove the requirement that a minister must review penalties for breaches of sanctions law personally;
- allow the Treasury (the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation) to publish notices on cases where it thinks a person has breached sanctions law but it has not (for whatever reason) imposed monetary penalties; and
- expand information-sharing powers relating to sanctions.

Significant substantive changes were also added to the legislation at Committee Stage in the House of Commons, providing for new legal criteria and procedures when creating new sanctions. These changes:

- deleted section 2 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, which set out additional requirements when making sanctions for

purposes other than compliance with a UN or international obligation (for example, the requirement to lay a report before Parliament explaining why sanctions are a reasonable course of action);

- created a new “urgent procedure” for sanctioning people by name or description, which can be used when the Minister considers it to be in the public interest, and relaxed some of the requirements under the “standard procedure”. These new procedures and requirements are also made available for already-existing sanctions;
- removed the requirement:
  - that a Minister can only sanction a person or vessel when they consider it appropriate to do so, having regard to the purpose of the sanctions;
  - to review certain sanctions every three years, and report on sanctions reviews to Parliament every year; and
  - to report to Parliament on (i) the creation of criminal offences in sanctions regulations; (ii) what sanctions regulations have been made and whether any of them had a human rights purpose; or (iii) amendments to sanctions regulations; and
- removed the ability of a court to award damages for claims relating to sanctions where the Government has acted negligently.

Further detail on these changes is provided in the Library [Briefing paper](#) on this Bill.

## New limitations on legal challenges

The Economic Crime Act also amended section 39 of the Sanctions Act to limit and prohibit certain damages from being awarded to sanctioned entities where the legality of any sanctions designations have been, or will be, challenged in court.

The Sections Act now only permits the payment of damages in connection with designations **in cases of bad faith**, and no longer allows the possibility of damages for negligence. Section 39 2(A) provides a power to impose a cap on damages for actions under the Sanctions Act. Section 64(3) of the Economic Crime Act provides that these provisions on damages will apply retrospectively to any proceedings issued after 4 March 2022, when the amendments were tabled, even if these proceedings relate to designations made previously.

## Retrospective effect of the changes

The changes and amendments made under the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022, as mentioned above, apply retrospectively to all previous sanctions Regulations. This means that pre-existing sanctions Regulations must be read as if the regulations contain the provisions required by the amendments made.

Therefore, some designation criteria still written in the relevant Regulations and accompanying policy papers on designation no longer apply. This includes, for example, references in pre-existing sanctions Regulations to the requirement that a Minister may not designate a person under the relevant sanctions regime unless they consider it appropriate, having regard to the purposes of the specific sanctions regime.

## 2.4

## The Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regime

### Background and purpose

The [Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021](#) were created using powers provided for in the [Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#). The Regulations were created to prevent and combat serious corruption, allowing the Secretary of State to impose financial sanctions and travel bans on persons involved in serious corruption.

Corruption is defined in the Regulations as “bribery or misappropriation of property”. These concepts are further defined in reg 4(3) on conduct relating to foreign public officials.

These regulations allow the Government to impose financial sanctions, including asset-freezes, and travel bans.

### Designation Criteria

Under reg 6(1), the Secretary of State may only designate a person on the sanctions list where the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds to suspect that that a person:

- is or has been involved in serious corruption,
- is owned or controlled directly or indirectly (within the meaning of regulation 7) by a person who is or has been so involved,
- is acting on behalf of or at the direction of a person who is or has been so involved, or
- is a member of, or associated with, a person who is or has been so involved.

Reg 6(3) states that a person is involved in serious corruption if:

- the person is responsible for or engages in serious corruption;
- the person facilitates or provides support for serious corruption;
- the person profits financially or obtains any other benefit from serious corruption;
- the person conceals or disguises, or facilitates the concealment or disguise of serious corruption, or any profit or proceeds from serious corruption;
- the person transfers or converts, or facilitates the transfer or conversion of, any profit or proceeds from serious corruption;
- the person is responsible for the investigation or prosecution of serious corruption and intentionally or recklessly fails to fulfil that responsibility, or
- the person uses threats, intimidation or physical force to interfere in, or otherwise interferes in, any law enforcement or judicial process in connection with serious corruption;
- the person contravenes, or assists with the contravention of, any provision of Part 3 of the Regulations [financial sanctions in place].

While the Regulations define “corruption”, as outlined above, they do not define “serious corruption”.

## Safeguards, transparency, and due process

When [announcing the sanctions regime in Parliament](#), then-Secretary of State Dominic Raab said:

For additional clarity in all this, we have published a policy note today that sets out how we will consider designations under these regulations. I know that, across the House, there is always interest in the legal criteria as well as the evidence base that we have to accumulate. It is right to say that we will also ensure due process and the rule of law, so that the rights of others are respected. Those designated will be able to request that a Minister reviews the decision, and they can also apply to challenge the decision in court, which is an important check in the system.

He also later said:

...criminal prosecutions are done on the criminal standard of proof, whereas sanctions are done on the civil standard ... One challenge we have with international corruption is with gleaning the evidence in relation to it, and one advantage we have with the sanctions regime is that it gives us more flexibility and agility to address to the hole ... that we are plugging.

The right for a designated person to request a review of their listing is contained in [section 23 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#), which provides for a right to request the variation or revocation of a designation. Upon receiving such a request, the Minister who designated the person (in this case, the Secretary of State) must decide whether to vary or revoke the designation or to take no action. However, [section 22\(3\) provides the obligation](#) that, if at any time the Minister considers that the required conditions under the sanctions Regulations are not met in respect of a relevant designation, the Minister must revoke the designation.

The Government's [Policy Paper](#) sets out the factors the Government considers relevant to designating individuals under this particular sanctions regime. The list contains illustrative factors that are likely to be relevant, but this list is not exhaustive. They must also be read in light of the retrospective amendments made by the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022, as detailed above.

The paper reiterates the conditions in the Act and the Regulations that:

The Regulations permit a Minister to designate a person only if the Minister has reasonable grounds to suspect that the person is an “involved person” in relation to serious corruption, as set out in the Regulations.

The list of factors for designation, broadly, includes:

- The Government's anti-corruption policy priorities, namely the Government is likely to have particular regard to serious corruption that:
  - enables or fuels national and international security threats
  - is linked to terrorism, serious and organised crime or instability overseas, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states
  - undermines development and poverty reduction and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals
  - impedes international trade and investment or undermines growth, including that which impacts directly on UK business
  - undermines a country's democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights
  - weakens vital public institutions including international organisations
  - exacerbates inequality or deprives citizens of vital public resources, including natural resources
- The scale, nature and impact of the serious corruption



- The status, connections and activities of the involved person
- Collective international action
- Interaction with law enforcement activities
- The risk of reprisals

The Government's [guidance to non-governmental organisations](#) also states that decisions about designations will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

In a [Parliamentary Question on 26 April 2021](#), Dan Carden MP asked the Government where it has:

... plans to create an Independent Expert Advisory Group to (a) advise him on the implementation of such sanctions, (b) ensure that objective criteria are applied consistently in respect of such sanctions and (c) review the delisting of people or entities under those regulations.

The Government [responded](#):

UK sanctions are smart tools that are carefully targeted to achieve their goals, while minimising potentially negative wider impacts. Designations under the Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021 may only take place where the relevant legal tests as set out in the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 and the Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021 are met.

The policy note that we have published alongside the regulations sets out some of the factors relevant to the consideration of designations under the Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021. These factors include HMG's wider anti-corruption priorities and the scale, nature and impact of the serious corruption in question, among others.

Under section 22 of the Sanctions Act, if at any time the Minister responsible for a designation considers that the designation criteria are not met, the Minister must revoke the designation. Periodic reviews of autonomous sanctions designations will take place every three years under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018. Designated persons may also request an administrative review of their designation, and, if this does not result in the designation being varied or revoked, may make further requests if there is a new significant matter to consider.

## 2.5

# Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime

## Background and purpose

The UK's global human rights sanctions regime is provided for in the [Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020](#), in force since 6 July 2020. This sanctions regime, [according to the Government](#), is intended to deter, and provide accountability for, activities which, if carried out by or on behalf of a

state, would amount to a serious violation of certain human rights by that state.

According to [the Regulation's Explanatory Notes](#), both state and non-state actors could be targeted under this regime, and the policy basis of the regime is explained as follows:

HMG seeks to champion human rights, good governance and the rule of law. Serious human rights violations by State actors, and similar conduct by non-State actors, leads to unstable and less prosperous societies. Such conduct perpetuates violent conflict, creates a world where terrorism flourishes and where democratic institutions are weakened. It has a devastating impact on individuals and places the safety of individuals and societies at risk. Successfully deterring such conduct would help create fairer and more just societies, which support the long-term global conditions most conducive to security, economic growth and the safety of all.

## Scope of the human rights sanctions

Specifically, the regulations provide for sanctions to be adopted in response to actions that would usually (if carried out by or on behalf of a state) amount to a serious violation of the following three human rights:

- The right to life
- The right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- The right to be free from slavery, not to be held in servitude or required to perform forced or compulsory labour, whether or not the activity is carried out by or on behalf of a State.

Persons undertaking or involved in these activities can be designated for the purpose of a travel ban or an asset freeze. It does not matter whether the actions in question are committed by a state or a non-state actor. The Regulations do not currently provide for sanctions for activities that would amount to other human rights violations.

The Government's [policy paper](#) on this sanctions regime sets out how the UK will consider certain factors when deciding to designate individuals and other actors as targets of these sanctions. For example, because of the wide nature of this particular regime, many of the factors "will be guided by the FCDO's human rights priorities, including objectives relating to published FCDO human rights priority themes".

For determining what amounts to serious human rights violations, [the Government will](#) "consider the scale, impact and nature both of the human rights violation or abuse and a person's involvement in that human rights violation or abuse, including whether the conduct has a systematic nature or is part of a pattern of behaviour".

## 2.6

## Asset Freezes vs seizing assets

The UK's sanctions regime – under the [Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#) - enables the UK to impose asset freezes as one type of sanction through secondary legislation.

An asset freeze sets a series of conditions on the individual or legal entity that has possession or control of the funds or economic resources of a designated person. The asset freeze may be distinguished from the sequestration of assets by the fact that it does **not** involve a change in ownership of these frozen funds or economic resources.<sup>2</sup>

The sanctions regime is slightly different when it comes to aircraft or shipping sanctions, provided for in sections 6 and 7 of the 2018 Act. Here, the powers allow for the detention (but not the seizure or sequestration) of specific ships or aircraft.

### Existing legislation for the confiscation of assets

Introduced by the [Proceeds of Crime Act 2002](#), civil recovery orders (CROs) allow law enforcement to confiscate criminal property without having to prove a criminal offence was committed (to the usual high criminal standard). These orders only require a civil standard of proof (i.e. on the balance of probabilities).

Instead of needing to prove a crime was committed, law enforcement bodies only needed to show a court that on the balance of probabilities (or “more likely than not”) unlawful conduct had occurred, and that the property was obtained as a result of that unlawful conduct.

However, use of CROs was limited to exceptional cases where the prospect of criminal prosecution was unavailable or undesirable. It didn't help in the most difficult cases, such as where concrete evidence was hard to obtain because the alleged launderer was part of, or had the support of, a foreign regime.

The [Criminal Finances Act 2017](#) therefore introduced Unexplained Wealth Orders (UWOs). Targeted at people linked with serious crime or who hold public office outside of Europe, they allow law enforcement to apply for a court order requiring someone to explain their interest in property and how they obtained it. If that person fails to comply, law enforcement may then apply to the court for a CRO with the benefit of a presumption that the property should be confiscated.

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<sup>2</sup> Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI), [UK financial sanctions: general guidance for financial sanctions under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018](#), December 2020 para 3.1.1

Unexplained Wealth Orders do not themselves grant powers to confiscate assets – they are an investigative tool that can make it easier to obtain a CRO.

Section 1 of the Library Briefing Paper on [Unexplained Wealth Orders](#) provides further background to CROs and UWOs.

In March 2022 the Government fast-tracked passage of the [Economic Crime \(Transparency and Enforcement\) Act 2022](#) in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Act introduced significant reforms to the UWO regime, intended to make them easier to obtain, enforce and monitor. The library's [briefing on the Act](#) discusses those reforms in more detail.

A Government fact sheet relating to the Act noted that [it was difficult to say whether the Act's reforms would increase the number of UWOs obtained](#), but that “even a single UWO will have a high impact”.

## 2.7

### Government considerations on amending the law

In the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Government has said that it is considering ways in which the UK could seize, rather than freeze, Russian assets and whether this could help with the rebuilding of Ukraine. In several answers to Parliamentary Questions, the Government has referred to such plans, but has not yet published any concrete proposals.

The [Financial Times reported in March](#) 2022 that the Government was “drawing up plans to seize British property owned by Russian oligarchs with links to President Vladimir Putin, without paying them compensation”.

In March, [the Government responded to a Parliamentary Question](#) on the potential merits of seizing assets from Russians under the Government's sanctions programme for use as future war reparations to support Ukraine:

We are looking at how we can go further to crack down on illicit money in British property and maximise the pressure on the Putin regime. Our unprecedented package of sanctions decisively delivers the highest economic cost the Kremlin has ever seen. Our sanctions send a clear message that nothing, and no one, is off the table.

During a debate on 22 March, [the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, James Cartlidge, said:](#)

I am pleased to report that the Ministry of Justice is working closely with colleagues across Government to look at how we can go further to crack down on illicit money in British property, including considering temporary asset seizures beyond the freezing regime that we already have in place. I am not yet in a position to present the details of this to the House. It is a complex issue

involving important policy and legal considerations. What I can say is that unlike the Putin regime, the Government will always preserve the rule of law and act against kleptocratic wealth.

On 30 May 2022, [the Government said](#) in response to a Parliamentary Question on whether the Government intends to use Russian assets frozen under sanctions for the benefit of victims in Ukraine:

Law enforcement agencies are currently able to freeze and seize foreign assets with links to criminality or unlawful conduct, by making use of powers granted under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

## 2.8

### Further Reading

- House of Commons Library, [Magnitsky Legislation](#), 20 July 2020
- House of Commons Library, [‘UK’s first post-Brexit sanctions’](#), 9 July 2020
- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, [‘UK sanctions relating to global human rights’](#), 6 July 2020
- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, [‘UK sanctions relating to global anti-corruption’](#), 26 April 2021
- RUSI Commentary, [“From freeze to seize: creativity and nuance is needed”](#), 7 June 2022
- Associated Press, [“EU seeks more clout against sanctioned Russian oligarchs”](#), 25 May 2022
- Euronews, [“Brussels proposes plan to confiscate frozen Russian assets to help rebuild Ukraine”](#), 26 May 2022

## 3

# Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

### [Meet the man behind the UK sanctions regime](#)

Financial News (Subscription required)

Justin Cash

18 May 2022

### [UK sanctions regime for fighting corruption accused of failures](#)

Financial Times (Subscription required)

Kate Beioley

2 May 2022

### [UK's vulnerability to corruption uncovered amid slow sanctions response](#)

The Guardian

Alex Cobham

5 March 2022

### [Global human rights sanctions: Mapping Magnitsky laws: The US, Canadian, UK and EU approach](#)

European Union Research Service

Martin Russell

November 2021

### [Year one in numbers: UK global human rights sanctions](#)

Redress

Charlie Loudon

20 July 2021

### [UK sanctions regime](#)

The Law Society

10 March 2021

### [The UK's new corruption sanctions regime – Can it help end the UK's role as a global money laundering centre and what role will journalists play?](#)

The Foreign Policy Centre

Dr Susan Hawley

10 March 2021

### [UK imposes sanctions against human rights abusers](#)

BBC News

6 July 2020

## 4

# UK Government material

### [The UK Sanctions List](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
6 July 2020 (Last updated 12 July 2022)

Find out which people, entities and ships are designated or specified under regulations made under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, and why.

### [First UK Annual Sanctions Report shows how UK independent sanctions underpin Global Britain's role on the world stage](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
13 January 2022

- the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office Sanctions Annual Report for 2021 has been published, which shows that, in its first full year since leaving the EU, the UK has imposed sanctions against 160 individuals and entities
- individuals and entities sanctioned for, among other activities, corruption and human rights abuses, are from a number of countries, including Myanmar, China, Belarus, Pakistan and Venezuela
- the report shows that since leaving the EU, the UK is more agile when deciding how and where to use sanctions which are now more focused on the national interest, while continuing to co-ordinate with our key international partners

The UK has published its [Annual Sanctions Report for 2021](#) – detailing for the first time the full extent of its new autonomous sanctions since exiting the European Union.

It comes after the UK established 2 new autonomous regimes, which allow it to show greater global leadership on sanctions, while acting more in the national interest.

On 6 July 2020, the UK launched the [Global Human Rights sanctions regime](#), a powerful new tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations or abuses. On 26 April 2021 this was followed by the launch of the [Global Anti-Corruption sanctions regime](#), enabling the UK to combat serious corruption around the world and prevent funds from being used to fund conflict, terrorism or organised crime.

Minister responsible for UK sanctions, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, said:

Since the end of the Transition Period, the UK has been pursuing an independent sanctions policy, driven by our foreign policy objectives and projecting the UK as a network of liberty and defender of human rights.

By leaving the EU and moving to an independent sanctions policy, the UK has become more agile and has real autonomy to decide how we use sanctions and where it is in our interests to do so.

The introduction of our autonomous sanctions regimes, alongside our implementation of UN sanctions regimes, underpins Global Britain's role as a positive force on the international stage.

The report shows that in 2021 the UK designated 160 individuals and entities across 13 regimes, launched the Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions regime and imposed a significant package of economic sanctions on Belarus. Sanctions imposed in 2021 include designations of:

- 108 individuals and 10 entities under the Belarus sanctions regime, as well as a significant package of economic sanctions
- 24 individuals and 9 entities under the Myanmar sanctions regime
- 5 individuals and 3 entities from China, Myanmar and Pakistan under the Global Human Rights sanctions regime
- 27 individuals across the world involved in serious corruption. This included misappropriation of public funds spent on memorabilia including a \$275,000 Michael Jackson glove; and ruthless exploitation of public food programmes in Venezuela

### **[UK announces first sanctions under new global human rights regime](#)**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

**6 July 2020 (Updated 7 July 2020)**

Forty-nine individuals and organisations involved in some of the most notorious human rights violations and abuses in recent years have been designated for sanctions under a [powerful new regime](#) established today by the UK, the Foreign Secretary has announced.

The individuals and organisations are the first wave of [designations under the new regime](#), with further sanctions expected in the coming months.

From today, the ground-breaking global regime means the UK has new powers to stop those involved in serious human rights abuses and violations



from entering the country, channelling money through UK banks, or profiting from our economy.

The measures will target individuals and organisations, rather than nations.

It is the first time that the UK has sanctioned people or entities for human rights violations and abuses under a UK-only regime, and will allow the UK to work independently with allies such as the US, Canada, Australia and the European Union.

The UK's first wave of sanctions under this new regime targeted:

- 25 Russian nationals involved in the mistreatment and death of auditor Sergei Magnitsky, who uncovered widespread Russian corruption by a group of Russian tax and police officials
- 20 Saudi nationals involved in the death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi
- 2 high-ranking Myanmar military generals involved in the systematic and brutal violence against the Rohingya people and other ethnic minorities
- 2 organisations involved in the forced labour, torture and murder that takes place in North Korea's gulags

Underlining the UK's position as a global force for good, this new regime showcases our commitment to the rules-based international system and to standing up for victims of human rights violations and abuses around the world.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, said:

Today we're designating 49 people and organisations for responsibility in some the worst human rights abuses in recent memory.

This is a demonstration of Global Britain's commitment to acting as a force for good in the world.

Following his [announcement in Parliament](#), the Foreign Secretary will meet with Sergei Magnitsky's widow and son Natalia and Nikita, along with his friend and colleague Bill Browder, at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

The regime will allow the UK to target individuals and organisations around the world unlike conventional geographic sanctions regime, which only target a country.

It could also include those who commit unlawful killings perpetrated against journalists and media workers, or violations and abuses motivated on the grounds of religion or belief.

A special unit will consider the use of future sanctions, with teams across the department monitoring human rights issues.

They will ensure targets under the landmark regime will have to meet stringent legal tests before the UK decides to designate, ensuring the sanctions are robust and powerful.

The suite of measures can also apply to those who facilitate, incite, promote, or support these violations/abuses, as well as those who financially profit from human rights violations and abuses.

The UK will continue to utilise a range of tools to tackle serious human rights violations and abuses around the world, including the UN and EU multilateral sanctions regimes.

## 5

## PQs

**Sri Lanka: Tamils****24 Jun 2022 | 19667****Asked by: Stephen Morgan**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of recent attacks against the Tamil community in Sri Lanka; and whether she has considered imposing sanctions on that country in response to those attacks.

**Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK Government regularly engages with the Sri Lankan Government on a range of issues, including human rights concerns such as the targeting and marginalisation of minority groups. We closely monitor the human rights situation, including developments in the North and East, through regular engagement with regional civil society and political representatives. The Minister for South Asia, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, has strongly condemned violence against peaceful protesters in Sri Lanka. He has reiterated fundamental rights, including the right to peaceful protest, must be protected.

Sanctions are one response among a number of diplomatic tools we can deploy around the world as part of a broader political strategy in order to change or send a political signal regarding particular behaviours. The Global Human Rights sanctions regime was introduced in July 2020, and gives the UK a powerful tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations. We keep all evidence and potential listings under close review. It would not be appropriate to speculate about future designations under the sanctions regime as to do so could reduce their impact. We will continue to consider a range of approaches to tackle serious human rights violations and abuses around the world.

**Myanmar: Internally Displaced People and War Crimes****22 Jun 2022 | HL700****Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Amnesty International's report *Bullets rained from the sky*, published on 31 May, about war crimes and displacement in eastern Myanmar.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK Government is deeply concerned by Amnesty International's latest report which highlights widespread atrocities against communities in Kayah and Kayah States, including indiscriminate attacks against civilians. We have been clear in our condemnation of the military coup in Myanmar. We are committed to ending the culture of impunity and continue to push for de-escalation of violence to create space for a political resolution. We are also fully committed to responding to urgent humanitarian needs, particularly for the most vulnerable communities, as well as supporting and sustaining the pro-democracy movement.

We are using sanctions to target the military's access to equipment which allows them to continue their campaign of violence. We have provided £500,000 to the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar which collects and preserves evidence of human rights violations for future prosecution. We also established the Myanmar Witness programme which gathers and reports on open-source information on serious human rights violations and abuses, including those against the Rohingya.

**Myanmar: Politics and Government**

**21 Jun 2022 | HL701**

**Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to cut the flow of (1) funds, and (2) arms, to the government of Myanmar.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Since the coup, we have worked quickly with partners to impose targeted sanctions against those who fund and arm the military, including military-linked businesses and procurement bodies in the Ministry of Defence. Most recently, on 16 June 2022, we announced our eleventh round of designations, targeting Russian and Myanmar arms dealers. We have also suspended trade promotion, strengthened advice to businesses and undertaken a rigorous review of our aid programme to ensure that no funds go to the military regime. We continue to encourage other countries to take similar measures.

The UK is a longstanding supporter of an arms embargo on Myanmar. We are clear that countries should not sell arms to the Myanmar military. On 27 March, the UK coordinated a joint statement with 48 signatories that committed us to working to prevent the flow of arms and equipment to the Myanmar military. We have also worked with partners to secure strong language on stopping the flow of arms at the G7, UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council.

### Topical Questions

21 Jun 2022 | 716 c707

**Asked by: Felicity Buchan**

I welcome the statement last week that we are talking to our international partners about a Marshall fund for Ukraine. I previously suggested that we should consider not only seizing the assets of sanctioned Russians, but monetising them, either by putting a lien on them or by outright sale. Clearly, that would need to be done in conjunction with partners. Has my right hon. Friend considered that?

**Answered by: Elizabeth Truss | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We are working with our allies and Ukraine on a new Marshall plan to help reconstruct Ukraine after the appalling war. There will be a Ukraine recovery conference in Lugano in the coming weeks, at which the United Kingdom will put forward our offer. We are looking at how we can seize Russian assets to help fund the rebuilding of Ukraine, which is something we are working on across Government and with our G7 partners.

### Nicolas Maduro

20 Jun 2022 | HL676

**Asked by: Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to increase sanctions on individuals associated with Nicolas Maduro.

**Answering member: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

UK sanctions are helping to encourage democratic change by keeping pressure on the illegitimate Maduro regime, targeting illicit finance, and calling out human rights abuses. We do not speculate on future listings.

### China: Sanctions

06 Jun 2022 | 8050

**Asked by: Rachael Maskell**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her Chinese counterpart on the potential merits of escalating sanctions against the Chinese authorities, including in the Xinjiang Province for the actions they are taking in defiling individuals human rights.

**Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The Government has previously imposed sanctions against Chinese Government officials and an entity responsible for enforcing China's repressive policies in Xinjiang. These measures were taken alongside the US, EU and Canada in an unprecedented joint action. While we do not speculate about possible future designations, as to do so may undermine their effectiveness, we will continue to keep all potential listings and evidence under review.

**West Africa: Sanctions**

**25 May 2022 | 3537**

**Asked by: Lyn Brown**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to (a) identify any potential links between individuals involved in the Wagner Group and mineral resource extraction companies in African states and (b) impose sanctions on any such companies and their official owners in the event that such a link is identified.

**Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The Wagner Group continues to play a destabilising role in a small number of African countries. Since my statement on 29 September 2021, I have made clear the destabilising impact of Wagner Group, the multiple human rights abuses they commit and their control of mineral resources, to the detriment of local citizens and their economy.

The Wagner Group is sanctioned under the UK's Russia sanctions regime. It would not be appropriate to speculate on potential measures, as doing so could reduce the impact of any options used in the future. We will continue to closely monitor the situation.

**Venezuela: Sanctions**

**24 May 2022 | 5360**

**Asked by: Fabian Hamilton**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential implications for her policies of the decision of the United States Government to ease some of the sanctions placed on Venezuela.

**Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The FCDO works very closely with US, Canadian and European allies on Venezuela and we will continue to coordinate our efforts to help encourage an end to the political crisis in that country and a return to democracy. The US and UK sanctions regimes are entirely distinct. Unlike the US, the UK has never imposed sectoral sanctions on Venezuela. The UK only has individual sanctions in Venezuela, targeted against individuals who have undermined democracy, engaged in grand corruption, or been involved in human rights abuses.

**Mali: Wagner Group**

**24 May 2022 | 5338**

**Asked by: John Healey**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the presence of the Wagner Group in Mali.

**Answering member: James Heappey | Ministry of Defence**

The Wagner Group is directly connected to the Russian state and is sanctioned under the UK's Russia sanctions regime. The UK is deeply concerned by its presence in Mali. The private Russian military company is a driver of conflict; it has committed human rights abuses elsewhere and been linked by nongovernmental organisations to abuses in Mali. Together with other partners active in the region, we continue to take a strong line against Wagner activities, and we remain committed to the UN peacekeeping mission there.

**Sanctions: Russia**

**17 May 2022 | 101**

**Asked by: Andrew Gwynne**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to ensure that Russian oligarchs who sold assets prior to sanctioning by the UK Government are held to account.

**Answering member: Damian Hinds | Home Office**

We, working under an FCDO-led designation regime, have sanctioned an unprecedented and world-leading number of oligarchs linked to the Kremlin-regime with implementation of financial sanctions led by the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation in HM Treasury and criminal investigations led by the National Crime Agency.

We have established a Combatting Kleptocracy Cell in the NCA which will target corrupt oligarchs and their associates through their assets hidden in

the UK, target the professional enablers of these corrupt oligarchs and support HMG sanctions delivery and enforcement.

The UK is also working with international partners to ensure there is nowhere for dirty Russian money to hide, including through the Russian Elites Proxies and Oligarchs (REPO) Task Force, which brings together international partners to ensure the effective enforcement of financial sanctions implemented against Kremlin-linked elites and entities.

### **Sanctions: Russia**

**21 Apr 2022 | 151275**

#### **Asked by: Dr Jamie Wallis**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the potential use of human rights legislation by Russian oligarchs to circumvent sanctions.

#### **Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

In response to Putin's assault on Ukraine we have introduced the largest and most severe economic sanctions that Russia has ever faced, targeting Putin's war machine. Since the invasion we have sanctioned over 1400 individuals and businesses/entities. We are targeting oligarchs close to Putin without fear or favour, and we will continue to do so.

In making designations under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 (SAML) the Government is required to act in accordance with rights conferred by the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998. SAML provides designated persons with a right to review their designation and designated persons are able to challenge that decision in UK courts.

### **Hong Kong: Sanctions**

**11 Apr 2022 | HL7399**

#### **Asked by: The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to introduce a country-specific sanctions list for Hong Kong.

#### **Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We will continue to consider designations under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations. It is not appropriate to speculate who may be designated under the sanctions regime in the future. To do this could reduce the impact of the designations.



### **Sudan: Human Rights**

**04 Apr 2022 | 147040**

**Asked by: Lyn Brown**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the US sanctions on the Central Reserve Police of Sudan for its involvement in serious human rights abuses, announced on 21 March 2022, what steps she is taking to hold that organisation and other security service organisations in Sudan to account for serious human rights violations.

**Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We remain concerned at the political crisis and continued violent repression of protesters in Sudan. The US is right to condemn Sudan's Central Reserve Police for their use of excessive use of force against protesters. We will continue to consider all options to maintain pressure on the Sudanese security forces, including the possibility of sanctions. We would not normally speculate about future sanctions targets as to do so could reduce their impact.

We continue to press the Sudanese military to allow peaceful protests, protect human rights and deliver accountability for past violations. This message was delivered directly by senior FCDO officials to Sudan's military leadership on 3 March in Khartoum.

### **Nicaragua: Sanctions**

**29 Mar 2022 | 143574**

**Asked by: Fabian Hamilton**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has plans for further sanctions on the Nicaraguan Government.

**Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK's sanctions measures against Nicaraguan officials are part of a wider set of UK actions aimed at promoting democracy and respect for human rights in Nicaragua. Most recently, the UK announced a further eight designations in November 2021 following undemocratic elections. We continue to work with partners in the region and our allies to press the Nicaraguan Government to end the repression in the country. We will keep the situation under close review.

## **Economic Crime**

**28 Mar 2022 | HL6944**

### **Asked by: Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to tackle illicit finance.

### **Answering member: Baroness Penn | HM Treasury**

Money obtained through corruption or criminality is not welcome in the UK, and the Government is taking concerted action to combat the threat of illicit finance from source to destination, including that linked to Russia.

In recent years, the Government published a landmark public-private partnership Economic Crime Plan. The Plan outlines a comprehensive national response to economic crime and sets out 52 actions being taken by both the public and private sectors to ensure the UK cannot be abused for economic crime.

The Government is also bringing forward significant investment to tackle economic crime; the combination of last year's Spending Review settlement and private sector contributions through the Economic Crime (AML) Levy will provide economic crime funding totalling around £400 million over the next three years.

Most recently, following the Prime Minister's announcement in February, the Government has brought forward the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act to crack down further on dirty money and corrupt elites in the UK. The Act:

- Introduces a "Register of Overseas Entities Beneficial Ownership of UK property" to tackle foreign criminals using UK property to launder money.
- Reforms our Unexplained Wealth Orders regime, to remove key barriers and help target more corrupt elites.
- Strengthens the Treasury's ability to take action against sanctions breaches.

This is not all. The Government has announced a new dedicated Kleptocracy cell in the National Crime Agency and published details of further upcoming legislation to clamp down on money-laundering and illicit finance. This will include fundamental reform of Companies House, enhanced information sharing powers and new powers to seize crypto assets finance.

### **Belarus: Political Prisoners**

**14 Mar 2022 | HL6508**

**Asked by: Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they had with countries at the United Nations regarding the human rights standards of political prisoners in Belarus.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

There are over 1000 political prisoners in Belarus. We remain deeply troubled about the intolerable prison conditions in which political detainees are held in Belarus and urge the authorities to release all political prisoners, immediately and unconditionally. This repression takes place in the context of Belarus' unacceptable support of Russia's illegal and unprovoked attack against Ukraine, which the UK strongly condemns and is taking action against.

The UK has imposed over 100 sanctions in response to the fraudulent elections, human rights violations, and repression of civil society and democratic opposition in Belarus. The UK is pleased to have worked alongside Germany, Denmark and other partners to establish the International Accountability Platform for Belarus (IAPB) in 2021. We are also strong and vocal supporters of the UN's mandate on accountability in Belarus. We back the extension of this UN mandate, and are working to ensure collaboration between the IAPB and UN, strengthening shared efforts to hold the Lukashenko regime to account for its reprehensible actions.

### **Burundi: Sanctions**

**07 Mar 2022 | HL6341**

**Asked by: The Lord Bishop of Durham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to revisit the sanctions imposed on Burundi after the lifting of sanctions by the EU and United States of America.

**Answering member: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We note that the US Government revoked its Burundi sanctions regime in November 2021 and that in February 2022 the EU lifted its suspension on direct financial assistance to the Government of Burundi. The EU retains a separate sanctions regime on Burundi, under which four individuals are designated. The UK's Burundi (Sanctions) Regulations 2021 are no longer in force. No individuals or entities were designated under those regulations. However we remain concerned about reports of human rights violations and abuses being committed against political opposition, critical voices and

human rights defenders in Burundi. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is therefore working on re-laying new Regulations to allow us to impose sanctions rapidly if needed. As required by Section 30 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, the Government will report annually to Parliament on all sanctions regimes.

### **Bangladesh: Police**

**24 Feb 2022 | 122863**

#### **Asked by: Sam Tarry**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the application of the Government's Magnitsky sanctions regime to Bangladeshi Government officials associated with the Rapid Action Battalion of its police force.

#### **Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Human rights violations by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) are a serious concern. We continue to raise our concerns over the protection of human rights in Bangladesh, including during Lord Ahmad's visit in November 2021 and in regular diplomatic exchanges. Bangladesh is an important UK security partner, and we maintain productive relationships with Bangladeshi security actors who operate in compliance with human rights. The UK does not provide training to the RAB.

We are aware of US sanctions on officials in Bangladesh. This is a decision by the US Government. The Global Human Rights Sanctions regime gives the UK a powerful tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations or abuses. We will continue to consider targets globally, guided by the objectives of the human rights sanctions regime and the evidence. We do not speculate on who may be designated in the future.

### **Crimes against Humanity: Sanctions**

**21 Feb 2022 | HL6124**

#### **Asked by: The Earl of Dundee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is their policy to seek to impose sanctions on armed groups or others who are identified as having committed or participated in crimes against humanity, including the targeted destruction of cultural property and heritage sites.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The Syria (United Nations Sanctions) (Cultural Property) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 impose trade sanctions for the purpose of giving effect to the United Kingdom's obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2199 (2015) ('UNSCR 2199'). UNSCR 2199 includes an obligation to take steps to prevent the trade in Syrian cultural property and other items of archaeological, historical, cultural, rare scientific and religious importance illegally removed from Syria since 15 March 2011, thereby allowing for their eventual safe return to the Syrian people.

The Iraq (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 impose trade prohibitions relating to illegally removed cultural property.

The UK's Global Human Rights sanctions regime gives the UK a powerful tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations or abuses, by imposing targeted asset freezes and travel bans. The rights included are: an individual's right to life; right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and right to be free from slavery, not to be held in servitude or required to perform forced or compulsory labour. Since establishing the Global Human Rights sanctions regime in July 2020, we have imposed sanctions on 81 individuals and entities involved in serious human rights violations from Russia, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea, Belarus, The Gambia, Ukraine and China.

**Religious Freedom: Sanctions**

**31 Jan 2022 | 109225**

**Asked by: Jim Shannon**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent progress she has made on sanctioning perpetrators of freedom of religion or belief abuses.

**Answering member: Vicky Ford | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities. In addition to our bilateral and multilateral work, we use our Global Human Rights sanctions regime to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations or abuses around the world, including those carried out against individuals on the basis of their religion or belief.

On 10 December 2021, we used this regime to designate Furqan Bangalzai, a former commander of terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Jhangvi for his role in orchestrating the 2017 bombing of a Sufi shrine, which killed over 70 people in Pakistan. On 22 March 2021, alongside the EU, US and Canada, we imposed sanctions on four senior Chinese government officials and one entity for gross human rights violations taking place against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. We will continue to draw on our range of levers to address FoRB abuses and violations, including sanctions where appropriate.

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina: Politics and Government**

**11 Jan 2022 | 99080**

#### **Asked by: Alicia Kearns**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the US Administration's decision to impose sanctions on Bosnian Serb leader, Milorad Dodik, for threatening the stability and integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### **Answering member: Chris Heaton-Harris | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Sanctions are an important part of the UK toolkit for the Western Balkans, for both corruption and destabilising activities. Experience has shown they work best when used in close coordination with our partners, and we are actively discussing with partners, including the US, how best to use these tools to target both the leaders of these moves, and those around them who help and facilitate. We keep all evidence and potential designations under close review. We will consider targets, guided by the objectives of the relevant sanctions regime and the evidence. It would not be appropriate to speculate about future sanctions targets as to do so could reduce their impact.

## 6

## Debates

### [Kazakhstan: Anti-corruption Sanctions](#)

03 Feb 2022 | House of Commons | 708 cc567-574

Agreed to on question.

### [Uyghur Tribunal Judgment](#)

20 Jan 2022 | House of Commons | 707 cc527-565

Motion that this House notes that the December 2021 Uyghur Tribunal's judgment in London found beyond reasonable doubt that the People's Republic of China was responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and torture in the Uyghur region; and calls on the Government to urgently assess whether it considers there to be a serious risk of genocide in the Uyghur region and to present its findings to the House within two months of this motion being passed, use all means reasonably available to ensure the cessation of ongoing genocide, including conducting due diligence to ensure it is not assisting, aiding, abetting or otherwise allowing the continuation of genocide and fulfil its other obligations under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, accept the recommendations of the fifth report of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, Uyghur forced labour in Xinjiang and UK value chains, Session 2019–21, HC 1272, including black-listing UK firms selling slave-made products in the UK and putting in place import controls to protect UK consumers, and place sanctions on the perpetrators of this genocide, including Chen Quanguo. Agreed to on question.

### [Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020](#)

24 Jun 2021 | House of Lords | 813 cc115-131GC

Lords question for short debate on the effectiveness of the Magnitsky-style sanctions issued under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020.

### [Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021](#)

26 May 2021 | House of Lords | 812 cc1013-1033

Lords motion to approve. Agreed to on question.

### [Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020](#)

29 Jul 2020 | House of Lords | 805 cc311-333

Lords motion to approve. Agreed to on question.

### [Hong Kong: Human Rights](#)

04 Jun 2020 | House of Lords 803 cc1502-1518

Lords question for short debate on what assessment they have made of the impact on human rights in Hong Kong of the national security law proposed by the National People's Congress of China.

## 7

## Statements

### [The Sanctions Regulations Report on Annual Reviews 2021](#)

13 Jan 2022 | HLWS523

**Minister for South and Central Asia, United Nations and the Commonwealth (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon):** Today I am pleased to publish “The Sanctions Regulations Report on Annual Reviews 2021”.

Section 30 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 requires the Minister to annually review each set of sanctions regulations to assess whether they are still appropriate for the purpose stated in them. The Minister must lay before Parliament a report containing conclusions of the review, the reasons for those conclusions, and a statement of any action that that Minister has taken or proposes to take. The Sanctions Regulations Report on Annual Reviews 2021 meets the requirement of Section 30.

Since the end of the Transition Period, the UK has been pursuing an independent sanctions policy, driven by our foreign policy objectives and projecting the UK as a network of liberty and defender of human rights. As set out in the Integrated Review, the UK uses our sanctions regimes as part of an integrated approach to promote our values and interests, and to combat state threats, terrorism, cyber-attacks, and the use and proliferation of chemical weapons.

### [Human Rights Sanctions Designations](#)

13 Dec 2021 | HCWS469

**Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Elizabeth Truss):** On International Human Rights Day, 10 December, the UK announced a further tranche of sanctions in response to the military coup in Myanmar under the Myanmar Sanctions Regulations 2021. Asset freezes have been imposed on four Myanmar entities responsible for manufacturing or procuring arms and equipment and providing support and finance to the Myanmar military, which has continued to undermine democracy and violate the fundamental rights of the civilian population. The UK is committed to preventing the flow of arms to Myanmar and will continue to use sanctions and diplomatic pressure to this end.

In parallel, the UK imposed an asset freeze and travel ban on one individual under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 for serious human rights abuses in Pakistan. The designation of a former Lashkar-e-Jhangvi commander who facilitated the 2017 bombing of the Lal Shahbaz Qalandar shrine, which killed at least 70 people sends a strong message that



the UK will use all tools at our disposal to defend Freedom of Religion and Belief.

The UK announced the designations during the US-hosted Summit for Democracy, as part of our commitment to continue to use our targeted sanctions to defend human rights as well as counter serious corruption globally.

The full list of designations is below:

Under the Myanmar Sanctions Regulations 2021

Myanmar

1. The Quarter Master General's Office
2. The Directorate for Defence Industries, a state-owned enterprise
3. The Department for Defence Procurement.
4. The Myanmar War Veterans Organisation, a quasi-reserve force for the Myanmar military

Under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020

Pakistan

1. Furqan Bangalzai; a former commander in the terror organisation Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.

### [Anti-Corruption Update](#)

22 Jul 2021 | HCWS244

**Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Dominic Raab):** Today, the UK has imposed asset freezes and travel bans on five individuals under the Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021.

This is the second set of designations under this regime since the Regulations were laid in April 2021. The regime can be used to impose sanctions for serious corruption around the world. As set out in the Regulations, the activities covered are bribery and misappropriation, plus a range of different kinds of involvement in such bribery or misappropriation.

These designations address cases of serious corruption which have deprived citizens of vital resources in Equatorial Guinea, Iraq, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

In Equatorial Guinea, the sanctions target the Vice President, Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue, for his involvement in the misappropriation of state funds, corrupt contracting arrangements and soliciting bribes to fund a lavish lifestyle in various countries abroad. We have designated Nawfal Hammadi

Al-Sultan, a former Iraqi Governor, who misappropriated public funds intended for reconstruction efforts and to provide support for civilians, and improperly awarded contracts and other state property. We have designated Alex Nain Saab Morán and Alvaro Enrique Pulido Vargas, businessmen with links to the Maduro regime, for exploiting two of Venezuela's public programmes which were set up to supply poor Venezuelans with affordable foodstuffs and housing. They benefitted from improperly awarded contracts, where promised goods were delivered at highly inflated prices. Finally, we have designated Kudakwashe Regimond Tagwirei, a Zimbabwean businessperson whose involvement in misappropriation was at the expense of the country's macroeconomic stability.

These latest designations show the UK's ongoing commitment to the fight against corruption. They send a powerful message to deter those involved in serious corruption around the world: you and your dirty money are not welcome in our country. We will continue to keep future designations under close review, guided by the purposes of the sanctions regime and the evidence.

### Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions

26 Apr 2021 | 693 cc57-68

**Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Dominic Raab):** With permission, Madam Deputy Speaker, I should like to make a statement on our new global anti-corruption sanctions regulations.

Corruption has an immensely corrosive effect on the rule of law and trust in institutions. It slows development, drains the wealth of poorer nations and keeps their people trapped in poverty. It poisons the well of democracy around the world. Whistleblowers and those who seek to expose corruption are targeted, and some have paid the ultimate price with their lives, including, of course, Sergei Magnitsky himself, the inspiration for our human rights sanctions regime. But his courage was not in vain. The framework of sanctions that we are launching today, shared by some of our partners around the world, flows directly from his decision to take a brave stance against injustice, and that will not be forgotten.

This country has an important role to play in the fight against corruption. Our status as a global financial centre makes us an attractive location for investment, and we are proud of that and welcome it. But it also makes us a honey pot—a lightning rod—for corrupt actors who seek to launder their dirty money through British banks or British businesses. That is why we have already taken steps to become a global leader in tackling corruption and illicit finance. Our law enforcement agencies are recognised as some of the most effective in the world. The National Crime Agency's international corruption unit and its predecessors have restrained, confiscated or returned

well over £1 billion of assets stolen from developing countries since 2006. My Department continues to provide funding for this vital work.

The Bribery Act 2010 criminalises bribery and the failure of businesses to prevent bribery from happening in the first place. In April 2016, the UK was the first in the G20 to establish a public register of the beneficial owners of companies and similar legal entities. That was an important first step in tackling the use of anonymous shell companies to move corrupt money around the world. I can tell the House that more than 4.5 million companies are now listed on that register.

In 2017, we adopted the ambitious five-year anti-corruption strategy, bringing in measures such as unexplained wealth orders, account freezing orders and the like, and that year, we also established the International Anti-Corruption Co-ordination Centre in London, which has helped to freeze more than £300 million of suspected corrupt assets worldwide and led to dozens of arrests. According to Transparency International's corruption perceptions index, those actions—our commitment to tackling corruption—have seen the UK rise from a global ranking of 20th in 2010 to 11th place in 2020, out of a total of 180 countries.

Against that backdrop, the new sanctions regime that I am announcing today will give us an additional powerful tool to hold the corrupt to account. It will prevent corrupt actors from using the UK as a haven for dirty money while combating corruption around the world. As hon. Members across the House will recall, this follows the launch of our global human rights sanctions regime, which I introduced to the House in July 2020. Since then, the UK has imposed human rights sanctions on 78 individuals and entities involved in serious human rights violations, including in Russia, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea, Belarus, the Gambia, Ukraine and, most recently, in relation to Xinjiang in China. Now, we have an equally powerful weapon in the fight against corruption.

As with our global human rights sanctions approach, the anti-corruption sanctions are intended not to target whole countries or peoples but, rather, the individuals who are responsible, and should be held responsible, for graft, and the cronies who support or benefit from their corrupt actions. These regulations will enable us to impose asset freezes and travel bans on individuals and organisations who are involved in serious corruption. Our approach is grounded in and based on the UN convention against corruption and related instruments. It has a clear focus on bribery and misappropriation of property, and that includes embezzlement.

Bribery is well understood. It is defined in the regulations. It includes both giving a financial or other kind of advantage to a foreign public official, and a foreign public official receiving a financial or other advantage. Misappropriation of property occurs when a foreign public official improperly

diverts property entrusted to them in their official role, and that may be intended to benefit them or a third party. For example, it could be, or include, siphoning off state funds to private bank accounts. It could include the improper granting of licences for the exploitation of natural resources, but whatever the particular circumstances, at the heart of this lies the same debilitating cycle of behaviour: corrupt officials ripping off their own people.

These powers will also enable us to target those who are either facilitating or profiting from such corrupt acts—those who conceal, those who transfer the proceeds of serious corruption and those who obstruct justice relating to serious corruption, and that will not be limited to state officials. For additional clarity in all this, we have published a policy note today that sets out how we will consider designations under these regulations. I know that, across the House, there is always interest in the legal criteria as well as the evidence base that we have to accumulate. It is right to say that we will also ensure due process and the rule of law, so that the rights of others are respected. Those designated will be able to request that a Minister reviews the decision, and they can also apply to challenge the decision in court, which is an important check in the system.

As well as introducing the legal basis for this regime, today, I can tell the House that we are also making the first designations under these new regulations, which include some of the most notorious cases of corruption in recent history. Each designation is underpinned by evidence and meets the test set out in the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 and the regulations. So today, I can tell the House that we are imposing sanctions on individuals who have been involved in serious corruption from six particular countries. First, we are imposing sanctions on 14 individuals involved in the \$230 million tax fraud in Russia perpetrated by an organised crime group and uncovered by Sergei Magnitsky. Next, we are imposing sanctions on Ajay, Atul and Rajesh Gupta and their associate Salim Essa for their roles in serious corruption. Those individuals were at the heart of a persistent pattern of corruption in South Africa that caused significant damage to its economy and directly harmed the South African people.

We are also designating three individuals involved in serious corruption in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala, including facilitating bribes to support a drug trafficking cartel. Finally, we are imposing sanctions on the Sudanese businessman Ashraf Seed Ahmed Hussein Ali, also known as Al-Cardinal, for the misappropriation of significant amounts of state assets in one of the very poorest countries in the world. That diversion of resources, in collusion with South Sudanese elites, caused serious damage to public finances in South Sudan and has also contributed to the ongoing instability and conflict there.

Let us be clear about this: corruption is not a victimless crime—far from it. By enriching themselves, these people have caused untold damage and hardship to their countries and communities, which they exploited for their own

predatory greed. So today we send a clear message: those sanctioned today are not welcome in the UK. They will not be able to use British bank accounts or businesses to give their illicit action some veneer of respectability, because their assets will be frozen. I can tell the House that more designations will follow in due course, based on the policy note as well as on the legal criteria that we have set out, and assessed against the evidence.

As with all targeted sanctions, they are most effective when they are backed up by co-ordinated international action, and of course that is particularly important when it comes to corruption, given the fluid, complex and global nature of modern illegal corruption schemes. We will continue to work with our friends and partners, including the US and Canada, who are equipped with the legal framework to take similar action. Today, I hope that the whole House will unite and join me in standing up for the values of democracy, good governance and the rule of law as Britain sends out the clearest message to all those involved in serious corruption around the world: you cannot come here, and you cannot hide your money here. I commend this statement to the House.

### Human Rights Update

06 Jul 2020 | HCWS337

**Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Dominic Raab):** I have today laid before Parliament, under the powers of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020.

These Regulations enable sanctions to be imposed on those who are involved in serious violations or abuses of human rights. This sanctions regime is not about punishing countries or peoples. It is a smart tool allowing the Government to impose both asset freezes and travel bans on specific individuals or entities in order to provide accountability for and deter serious violations of human rights around the world and prevent those responsible from coming to the UK or laundering their assets here. These sanctions will help to ensure that the UK is not a safe haven for those involved in serious human rights violations, including those who profit from such activities.

The Regulations allow for Ministers to impose sanctions on persons who are involved in activities that would amount to a serious violation of the right to life; the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and the right to be free from slavery, not to be held in servitude or required to perform forced or compulsory labour. The Global Human Rights sanctions regime can be used to target different forms of involvement in such violations of human rights, including those who profit from them. The Regulations allow for non-State actors as well as State actors to be designated.

The introduction of this autonomous human rights sanctions regime will give the UK an additional, powerful tool to support human rights across the world, and underpin Global Britain's role as a force for good in the world.

Today, I will also publish the first persons to be designated under this new sanctions regime.

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