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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
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HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Berridge	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
Lord Bethell	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Frost	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 7 July 2021

Finance Bill 2021-22: L-day

[HLWS150]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Government will introduce the Finance Bill following the next Budget.

In line with the approach to tax policy making set out in the Government's documents 'Tax Policy Making: a new approach', published in 2010, and 'The new Budget timetable and the tax policy making process', published in 2017, the Government is committed, where possible, to publishing most tax legislation in draft for technical consultation before the legislation is laid before Parliament.

The Government will publish draft clauses for the next Finance Bill, which will largely cover pre-announced policy changes, on Tuesday 20 July along with accompanying explanatory notes, tax information and impact notes, responses to consultations and other supporting documents. All publications will be available on the GOV.UK website.

Life Sciences Vision

[HLWS151]

Lord Bethell: In 'Build Back Better: our plan for growth', the Government committed to publishing a series of Sector Visions that back the sectors and technologies that will shape the UK's future. I am delighted to announce the publication of the first of these, on Life Sciences.

The Life Sciences Vision sets our ambitious plans, jointly developed by Government, the NHS and the sector, to maintain the UK's position as a global Life Sciences leader. It builds on the successes of the science and research response to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in vaccines and research, and benefits from new regulatory freedoms and opportunities now that we have left the European Union.

The policy content of the Vision focusses on three areas: 1) Science and Research, capitalising on the UK's deep industrial and academic expertise, and realising the significant potential of Genomics and Health Data to consolidate the UK's status as a world leader in research; 2) NHS as an Innovation Partner, ensuring the NHS is using the latest and most innovative science and technology; and 3) Business Environment, making sure the incentives are right for life science companies to start, grow and invest in the UK.

The Vision also highlights seven core disease and technology areas where there is an opportunity for Government, industry, the NHS, medical research charities and academia to work together to meaningfully improve treatment options. These key disease areas are: Cancer, Dementia, Mental Health, Obesity, Ageing, Respiratory Disease and Vaccines.

The pandemic shows the importance of a flourishing Life Sciences sector to resilience and economic growth across the nations and regions of the UK. This Vision will plot the course for the UK to maintain its global leadership in this important sector.

In developing this Vision, we have undertaken extensive engagement with stakeholders representing small and large businesses, charities, patient interest groups, and businesses representative organisations around the country, as well as the NHS and the devolved administrations. We will continue to do so as we begin to develop our implementation plans.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 7 July 2021

Agriculture: Plastics

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made as to whether Oxo-Biodegradable plastic sheeting used by farmers is fully biodegradable leaving no residue. [HL1339]

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to appoint an independent commission free of all commercial connection to evaluate whether Oxo-Biodegradable products used in crop protection are fully biodegradable leaving no residue. [HL1340]

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to make representations to the European Commission on the usability and safety of Oxo-Biodegradable products in the farming industry; and if so, whether they will coordinate those representations with the government of Ireland. [HL1341]

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the relative and comparative benefits of bio-based resin from (1) starch, and (2) lactic acid, in biodegradable products used in agriculture, compared to Oxo-Biodegradable plastics. [HL1342]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: On 8 April 2021, we published our response to the call for evidence on the need for standards for bio-based, biodegradable and compostable plastics:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/standards-for-biodegradable-compostable-and-bio-based-plastics-call-for-evidence.

While neither a specific assessment of oxo-biodegradable plastic sheeting used by farmers, nor an assessment comparing bio-based resin from starch and lactic acid in biodegradable products used in agriculture to oxo-biodegradable plastics has been made, the aforementioned call for evidence covered oxo-biodegradable plastics.

The Government response acknowledges that there is currently insufficient evidence demonstrating that oxo-biodegradable plastics perform as claimed and biodegrade, without residue, in a reasonable timeframe in the open environment. We continue to monitor the latest developments and evidence and are keen to see research published in international peer reviewed journals illustrating how these plastics degrade in the marine environment, open environment, and under the soil, specifically under naturalistic conditions, as opposed to experimental models of aging. We also welcome further

research on the full environmental impacts of using bio-based plastics.

Over the coming months, we intend to commission a research project to further consider the evidence that has been supplied to the call for evidence within the context of wider literature and new research.

We do not plan to make representations to the European Commission on the usability and safety of oxo-biodegradable products in the farming industry.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Plastics [standards-biobased-biodegradable-compostable-plastics.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-06-23/HL1339>

Channel Four: Privatisation

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to privatise Channel 4. [HL1487]

Baroness Barran: As part of its ongoing strategic review of the UK's system of public service broadcasting, the Government launched a public consultation on the future of Channel 4, including its ownership model and remit, on 6 July 2021.

The broadcasting landscape has changed beyond recognition since Channel 4's creation almost 40 years ago, and it continues to change apace. Increased global competition, changing audience habits, the decline of linear advertising revenue, and a wave of consolidation in the sector all pose challenges.

The Government's consultation seeks views and evidence on whether stakeholders agree that a new ownership model would give Channel 4 the broadest range of tools to continue to thrive as a public service broadcaster in the face of these new challenges.

Economic Partnership Agreements: Japan

Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to comply with Article 14.12 of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, and (2) to discuss measures with the government of Japan to ensure adequate remuneration for (a) performers, and (b) producers, of phonograms used for (i) broadcasting, or (ii) any communication to the public. [HL1360]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Article 14.12 of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) commits the UK and Japan to discuss measures to ensure adequate remuneration for performers and producers of phonograms when phonograms published for commercial purposes are used for broadcasting or for any communication to the public.

The Parties are currently discussing the implementation of committees under CEPA, including a Committee on Intellectual Property where technical discussions, including those relating to performer and producer remuneration rights, can take place.

The Government will continue to consult with stakeholders, including through the department's Trade Advisory Groups and Thematic Working Groups, to inform its discussions.

Employment: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent the long-term loss of labour market participation among people under the age of 40 as COVID-19 restrictions are eased. [HL1514]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is committed to supporting everyone who has been affected by the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the labour market. We want everyone to be able to find a job, progress in work and thrive in the labour market.

Through the Plan for Jobs, the government invested £33 billion in measures to create, support and protect jobs.

The Plan for Jobs package includes the Kickstart Scheme, aimed at creating new, fully subsidised jobs for young people aged 16 to 24 on Universal Credit. This is further supported by the DWP Youth Offer (18 to 24 year olds making a Universal Credit claim), so every young person, whatever their background or challenge, gets the chance to shape their own future.

Most recently, the Restart Scheme started in June, will support all age groups, who have been unemployed for over 12 months, providing intensive and tailored support to help their entry into work. We know from experience that tailored provision can have a real impact on supporting people after an extended period out of work.

GCSE: Languages

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to publish their response to the consultation on proposed reforms to GCSE examinations in French, Spanish and German. [HL1343]

Baroness Berridge: Officials continue to analyse the responses to the consultation and, whilst we have not yet specified a date for publication, it is expected that the government's response will be published shortly after this year's school summer holiday.

Great Barrier Reef

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to UNESCO about the future status of the Great Barrier Reef. [HL1344]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK has co-signed a letter to UNESCO Director-General to underscore the importance of a transparent process and consultative decision making in interactions with member states.

HMS Glasgow

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the new acceptance date for delivery of HMS Glasgow. [HL1503]

Baroness Goldie: On current plans, HMS GLASGOW will be floated-up in BAE System's Govan shipyard in the second half of 2022 and then transferred to its Scotstoun shipyard. There, she will be fitted-out with complex weapons and other systems. After completion of sea trials and Royal Navy training and preparations, she is currently expected to enter service in 2027.

Human Rights

Asked by Lord Moonie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that British personnel working on (1) UN, (2) EU, and (3) African Union, (a) military, (b) humanitarian, and (c) hybrid missions, are supported in reporting (i) observations, and (ii) allegations, of human rights abuses, including the use of child labour; and what steps they take to ensure that any such reports are passed to the highest levels of the relevant international oversight bodies. [HL1355]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We work bilaterally to raise specific cases of concern as appropriate and take regular action on the international stage, including through the Human Rights Council to press countries to improve their record on human rights. The UK Government also has an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJA) policy, which provides a rigorous assessment framework to assess whether UK engagement may directly or significantly contribute to a violation of human rights or international humanitarian law, prior to any justice or security sector assistance being provided.

In UN peacekeeping, training on human rights is central to preventing violations and abuses, and should remain an essential prerequisite by field missions and at UN Headquarters level. In this regard, the UK ensures British military and police personnel deployed to the UN receive training on all core UN modules, including identifying human rights violations and abuses, actions to take if human rights abuse and violations are observed, and their duties as peacekeepers to protect and promote the rights of children.

Asked by Lord Moonie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review, in cooperation with (1) the government of the USA, (2) the governments of Commonwealth

countries, (3) the EU and its Member States, and (4) the government of Switzerland, UK (a) legislation, (b) practice, and (c) capability, to interdict (i) transfers of funds, and (ii) the movement of goods, derived from locations where there is evidence that human rights abuses have taken place. [HL1356]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We work closely with our partners across the globe to tackle human rights violations and abuses. On 6 July 2020 the government introduced the Global Human Rights sanctions regime which gives powers to impose asset freezes and/or travel bans on individuals and entities involved in serious human rights violations or abuses. 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. As required by Section 30 and 32 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, the Government will report annually to Parliament on all sanctions regulations.

Navy: Black Sea

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the reported comments by General Sir Nick Carter that incidents such as the recent confrontation with Russia off the Crimea are giving him "sleepless nights" and are an example of where a miscalculation could come from an "unwarranted escalation". [HL1574]

Baroness Goldie: The Ministry of Defence conducts careful assessment of the risks associated with all operations to avoid miscalculation and unintended escalation.

With regard to HMS DEFENDER's route through the Black Sea, freedom of navigation is a fundamental right exercised by all nations. HMS DEFENDER was conducting innocent passage, taking the most direct route from Odesa to Batumi through Ukrainian territorial waters using an internationally recognised Traffic Separation Scheme. The UK does not recognise Russian claims to the waters in question, nor do we recognise the Russian assertion that HMS DEFENDER was in violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The UK takes its Treaty obligations, including the management of operational risk, very seriously and it remains essential that all conduct is safe and professional and in accordance with international law. The Royal Navy's presence is about cooperating with our partners and Allies to advance regional security, stability and freedom of navigation.

North Korea: Religious Freedom

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Korea Future Initiative Persecuting Faith: Documenting religious freedom violations in North

Korea (Volume I), published on 27 October 2020, what assessment they have made of the account of a forced abortion on a woman suspected of being Christian; and what plans they have to mark International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on 26 June. [HL1334]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is deeply concerned by reports, including from Korea Future Initiative, which tell of serious human rights offences and persecution of those who are caught practising religion. Defending the right to freedom of religion or belief for all is a priority for the UK Government and we continue to use international fora to call on the DPRK government to acknowledge and address the many reports of serious and wide-ranging human rights violations in the country. We also raise our concerns directly with the DPRK government, including with the DPRK's Ambassador in London.

As regards marking International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, as the FCDO Minister for human rights I made clear on 26 June that we honour the victims and survivors of torture across the world. The UK will always stand up against this cruel practice, working with global partners to end its use and deliver justice for victims.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Korea Future Initiative Persecuting Faith: Documenting religious freedom violations in North Korea (Volume I), published on 27 October 2020, what assessment they have made of the account of a pregnant woman being subjected to a forced induction followed by the infant being deliberately suffocated. [HL1335]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is deeply concerned by reports, including from Korea Future Initiative, which tell of serious human rights offences and persecution of those who are caught practising religion. Defending the right to freedom of religion or belief for all is a priority for the UK Government and we continue to use international fora to call on the DPRK government to acknowledge and address the many reports of serious and wide-ranging human rights violations in the country. We also raise our concerns directly with the DPRK government, including with the DPRK's Ambassador in London.

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Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the value of the Overseas Development Assistance crisis reserve

fund in each of the last five years; and what is its current value. [HL1336]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Foreign Secretary's Written Ministerial Statement on UK ODA allocations for 2021/22 included £30 million as a new ODA crisis reserve to enable FCDO to respond rapidly to new humanitarian crises. This reserve is not directly comparable to previous arrangements originally announced in 2015 for an annual ODA Crisis Reserve of £500 million. This was a Cross-Whitehall reserve and comprised of £200 million as an annual cash contingency used for a wide range of crises and £300 million as a 'redeployable reserve' on DFID's baseline that could nominally be reallocated to a major new crisis.

Palestinians: Recognition of States

Asked by Lord Stone of Blackheath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 21 June (HL820) and their position that they will "recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace", what assessment they have made of the case for recognising Palestine as a state now in order to facilitate negotiations between the government of an internationally-recognised state of Palestine and the government of Israel on an agreed border; and whether they will now recognise the state of Palestine. [HL1361]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Any decision to recognise a Palestinian state will rest on an assessment of the prospects for peace, and what best supports progress towards a two-state solution. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. The UK priority is working with the parties and other international actors to encourage a durable ceasefire and to urge them to address the drivers of conflict.

Prison Sentences

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many cases of Imprisonment for Public Protection are supervised in the community by the National Probation Service, by number of years since the tariff. [HL1366]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: As at 31 December 2020, there were 3,125 offenders serving a sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) being supervised in the community by the Probation Service in England and Wales. For the purposes of providing the information requested, relevant variables could be matched across the two separate datasets held centrally in only 2,637 of those cases.

<i>Years since tariff expiry</i>	<i>Number of IPP offenders supervised in the community</i>
Less than 12 months	4
1	16
2	38
3	58
4	80
5	125
6	145
7	230
8	260
9	314
10	361
11	431
12	347
13	196
14	32
Total	2,637

The figures in this table have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Offenders serving an IPP sentence may be released into the community once they have completed their tariff only at the discretion of the Independent Parole Board. Once released, they are managed under licence by the Probation Service. The IPP licence period differs from licences for other indeterminate sentences in that, after 10 years from first release by the Parole Board, offenders can apply to the Board to have the licence terminated. The minimum 10-year period is not paused or reset if an offender is recalled to prison or serves a subsequent sentence for further offences.

Russia: Migration

Asked by Lord Moonie

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK embassies and high commissions been tasked to report movements of personnel from ex-Soviet states to regions where economies are dependent on (1) artisanal mining, and (2) logging. [HL1357]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: UK Embassies and High Commissions have not been asked to monitor and report these issues.

Shipping: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the proposed naval cable monitoring and repair ship is intended to replace the sophisticated ships currently looking after undersea cables. [\[HL1583\]](#)

Baroness Goldie: The Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ship will be included in the 30-year cross-Government shipbuilding pipeline which will be published in the National Shipbuilding Strategy later this year. This new capability will enhance our ability to protect our underwater critical national infrastructure and our ability to detect threats in the North Atlantic and beyond.

Uganda: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the rise in COVID-19 infections in Uganda; what assessment they have made of the scale of the shortage of (1) oxygen, (2) personal protective equipment, and (3) other medical supplies in that country; and whether they intend to provide emergency aid to the government of Uganda to assist with these problems. [\[HL1359\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Uganda is currently experiencing a COVID resurgence with a rise in weekly cases from 3,228 to 9,525 from May 23-29 to June 13-19. Although a lock down was put in place on 18th June, cases are expected to remain high. The surge in cases has increased demand for critical supplies including oxygen, with current capacity meeting only 10% of projected daily oxygen cylinder consumption rates. The expansion of patient care to more health facilities has also resulted in increased consumption of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), testing supplies and kits. An increased supply, particularly of gloves and masks, is needed.

In response to the current crisis the UK has committed £500,000 to UNICEF Uganda's COVID-19 appeal - vital support that will benefit over 1.8 million people across Uganda. The funding will support an increase in oxygen production and delivery, and improve the availability of PPE at selected health facilities, to help keep health care

workers safe. Immediate benefits include the purchase of 100 7,500-litre oxygen cylinders and the provision of operational support to four oxygen plants for three months. UK support will also enable the procurement and installation of a new oxygen plant, boosting Uganda's oxygen production capabilities. In addition, funding will support the training of health care workers in PPE and oxygen use.

Visas: EU Countries

Asked by Lord Bowness

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proposals they have put forward to secure UK citizens the right to remain in the EU for 180 days without the need for a visa; on what grounds the EU did not agree to those proposals; and what steps they have taken since 31 January to reopen the matter in discussions with the EU. [\[HL1337\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: During negotiations with the EU, the Government discussed arrangements for British Citizens travelling to the Schengen Area. Regrettably, the EU consistently maintained that British Citizens will be treated as Third Country Nationals under the Schengen Borders Code from 1 January 2021. This means that British Citizens are able to travel visa-free for short stays for up to 90 days in a rolling 180-day period. This is the standard length of stay that the EU offers to nationals of eligible third countries, in line with existing EU legislation. British Citizens who are planning to stay longer than 90 days in a rolling 180-day period will need permission from the relevant Member State. This may require applying for a visa and/or permit.

The UK's Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EU notes that both the UK and EU currently provide for visa-free travel for short-term visits for each other's nationals in accordance with their respective laws. The detail of those arrangements is set by domestic law, reflecting the UK's position as a non-EU Member State. Negotiations with the EU have concluded and the Government is focused on the smooth, robust and effective implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The Government does not typically enter into bilateral agreements on visa-free travel.

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