

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you the statement of the United Kingdom in response to the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Venezuelan Mission to the United Nations, in the meeting of members of the Security Council to discuss the situation in Venezuela on 20 May 2020 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jonathan Allen
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland to the United Nations



**Annex to the letter dated 29 May 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires
a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I refer to the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Venezuelan Mission to the United Nations, in the meeting of members of the Security Council to discuss the situation in Venezuela on 20 May 2020. I further refer to the letter sent from the same on 26 May 2020 to your Excellency as current President of the Security Council.

The claim that the United Kingdom, through its Venezuelan Reconstruction Unit or otherwise, had prior knowledge of the 3 May 2020 incident in which defector Venezuelan military representatives and independent security contractors entered Venezuela by speedboat is absolutely untrue.

The Venezuela Reconstruction Unit in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was established in 2019 to coordinate the approach of the United Kingdom to the international response to the dire economic and humanitarian situation in Venezuela. The United Kingdom is committed to working with international partners to bring a peaceful end to the appalling crisis in Venezuela, and the Venezuela Reconstruction Unit is a reflection of that commitment.

The Unit has visited Venezuela twice, obtaining visas through the Embassy of the Maduro regime in London, in order to understand the challenges and determine how the United Kingdom might help. During the first visit, the Unit had diplomatic engagement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Maduro regime. On both visits, United Kingdom Ambassador Andrew Soper spoke publicly about the Unit and its staff. The role of the Unit was further outlined by the Chargé d'Affaires of the United Kingdom in Caracas when summoned by the regime's Foreign Minister on 14 May 2020. The Government of the United Kingdom, including the Venezuela Reconstruction Unit, had no prior knowledge of the 3 May 2020 incident in Venezuela, and was not attempting to secure "preferred status" for British businesses in the case of the overthrow of Nicolás Maduro.

With regard to the reference made to United Kingdom warships in the Caribbean, the United Kingdom has a permanent maritime presence in the North Atlantic to assure the security of our five Overseas Territories in the Caribbean and the broader region. *HMS MEDWAY* forms the basis of this year's maritime presence, enhanced by *RFA ARGUS'* deployment in April 2020 to provide further resilience in preparation for the annual hurricane season. This maritime presence is not part of a "covert assault" against Venezuela.

With regard to the letter sent to the Security Council on 26 May 2020 by the Permanent Representative of the Venezuelan Mission, I would like to reiterate, as has been stated previously to the Security Council, that the Bank of England is an independent public organization. As a matter of longstanding policy, Her Majesty's Government does not intervene in private matters or any disputes that may arise therefrom. As an independent public organization, the Bank of England is not an "executing arm" of the Government of the United Kingdom.

Furthermore, with regard to the other allegations made, the Government of the United Kingdom has in no way divested Venezuelans of the financial means to overcome the humanitarian crisis. In fact, we are among top donors to United Nations and other humanitarian efforts in Venezuela, having recently committed \$30 million for 2020–2022 to support Venezuelans in need both inside the country and in the region, building on \$24 million of United Kingdom support provided in 2019, which

is also supporting the COVID-19 response. We also deny the allegation that we are responsible for depriving the Venezuelan people of food and medicine. The only party responsible for the Venezuelan people's years-long deprivation of food, medicine, and other basic goods and human rights is the Maduro regime, which has ruined Venezuela through its longstanding corruption, incompetence and mismanagement.

(Signed) Jonathan **Allen**
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland to the United Nations
