

Calling for a strengthening of global resilience to food insecurity

Thank you, President, and I join others in thanking you for convening the debate today. And I also thank our briefers for their very insightful remarks.

At the start of the year, the UN's Global Humanitarian Overview warned of unprecedented levels of global food insecurity, driven by a perfect storm of COVID-19, the climate crisis and conflict.

Yemen faces catastrophic levels of food insecurity for the fifth year running.

Refugees across the Sahel are suffering from increased violence and reduced humanitarian access.

And in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Ethiopia and Somalia, millions of people affected by conflict are also grappling with the worst drought in 40 years.

Russia ignored this suffering in choosing to invade Ukraine, the breadbasket of the world.

Ukraine's food and fertiliser exports were feeding up to 400 million people worldwide.

And now, a critical part of the world's food supply chain is being throttled by Russia.

Across the world, 13 million hungry children, already subsisting on a knife-edge – of those, 2 million now face starvation this year.

As our Minister explained yesterday, the UK fully supports the US-led 'Roadmap for Global Food Security' and the Global Alliance launched under Germany's G7 Presidency.

We have the food and the means to help the most vulnerable, but we must act now.

First, the international community must enable the free-movement of food.

Alongside over 50 WTO members, the UK has committed to keeping food and agricultural markets open, predictable and transparent.

All WTO members must prohibit export restrictions on food bought for the World Food Programme.

Second, it is vital that we strengthen global resilience to prevent future famine risks.

As we set out in the UK's International Development Strategy, which we launched this week, the UK will support the most vulnerable countries with over \$3.5 billion of humanitarian aid in the next three years.

British International Investment – the UK's development finance institution – will scale up high-quality and sustainable investments, including in the food and agricultural sector.

And the World Bank must deliver swiftly on its plans to strengthen fragile economies by distributing \$170 billion over the next 15 months.

Finally, actors on the ground need to live up to their responsibilities, under international humanitarian law. We will continue to pursue accountability of those using starvation as a weapon of war.

President,

This man-made global crisis requires a collective, global response.

The UK stands in solidarity with vulnerable countries and will play its part.

Russia must now play theirs: end the conflict and the global shocks it is inflicting on the world's poorest.

I thank you.