

Press release: Emergency humanitarian UK aid package to DRC as violence escalates

Harriett Baldwin visits a camp for displaced people in the DRC. Photo: Connie Fisher

During a visit to a camp for displaced families in Kalemie in the DRC, Africa minister Harriett Baldwin denounced recent escalations in violence across the east of the country and announced an emergency package of UK aid support which will provide additional lifesaving food, water and medical care to hundreds of thousands more people in desperate need.

This includes:

- giving over 390,000 more people access to clean drinking water
- providing over 85,000 more people with food or assistance to meet urgent food and other basic needs
- reaching over 38,000 more children suffering from malnutrition with vital nutrition support
- providing essential medical care to over 240,000 more people, including drugs for pregnant mothers

The UK recognised the crisis early and the Department for International Development (DFID) was one of the first donors to step up support.

The minister also called on the international community to increase support urgently for the country, announcing this humanitarian package as leaders from the international community are set to gather in Geneva today (Friday 13 April) for a UN pledging conference for the DRC.

Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin said:

I have seen for myself the devastating impact of this terrible crisis – but UK aid is already on the ground and with today's emergency package, we are providing a vital lifeline for more desperate mothers and their starving children who have been forced to flee their homes.

This is a major humanitarian crisis and I have pressed for the DRC to fully recognise the scale of suffering, and cooperate with international efforts to help the millions of Congolese people affected. It is important that international partners also urgently step up their support.

The DRC has huge potential to be a prosperous nation, but it's vital we work now to establish the political stability which will

create the foundations for future growth and a safer and brighter future for all Congolese people. Key to this will be credible, constitutional and inclusive elections in December 2018.

DFID's humanitarian response is already reaching over three million people across the country with lifesaving aid.

During her visit minister Baldwin asked to meet with President Kabila. She met with representatives from across government, including opposition candidates and the DRC's electoral commission (CENI), to stress the vital importance of the DRC holding credible, constitutional and inclusive elections by the end of this year, to help tackle some of the root causes of violence and suffering in DRC.