

Press release: UK aid pledges “vital lifeline” for Syrians

The UK will pledge a total of £400 million of life-saving aid to the 2019 Syria crisis response to help those who need it most, Minister for the Middle East, Alistair Burt, announced today.

The pledge, which includes an additional £100 million of UK aid, building on the £300 million previously allocated to the UK's response to the conflict in Syria, will be made at the at the 'Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region' Conference in Brussels this week (14 March 2019).

The pledge signals ongoing support from the UK for Syria's future, and will also help to limit the impacts of the ongoing conflict inside Syria, including the threat of extremist influences.

The UK has been at the forefront of the humanitarian response to the Syria crisis and continues to be one of the largest international donors, having now committed more than £2.8 billion since 2012. Across Syria and the region, we have provided over 27 million food rations, over 14 million medical consultations, and over 10 million vaccines since the conflict began.

Minister for the Middle East, Alistair Burt, said:

The humanitarian situation in Syria is still critical, with millions of people displaced across the region since the conflict began. Our pledge is a clear commitment that UK support to the Syrian people is steadfast.

Today's pledge of UK aid will provide a vital lifeline to those caught up in the conflict, delivering food and clean drinking water, medical care, vaccinations, and education for children.

We cannot treat instability in the Middle East as a distant problem. UK aid is helping keep both Syrian and British people safe from instability and extremism.

The UK's pledge for the Syria Crisis will support Syrians inside Syria and neighbouring countries, including Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Our support will:

- help vulnerable Syrians access clean drinking water;
- deliver food, clothing, tents, hygiene kits and other essential survival items to those in need;
- provide access to medical care, including vaccinations against deadly diseases and counselling for those traumatised by the conflict; and
- help Syrian refugees find jobs and access education.

Today's pledge will support further efforts by the UK government to help build greater stability across the region, including the bold new approach to UK aid in Jordan launched last month. The Jordan: Growth and Opportunity conference in London saw the UK convene global leaders behind Jordan's plans for economic growth and reform.

Humanitarian access to millions in need within Syria continues to be obstructed by the Syrian regime, who routinely refuse requests from the UN and aid organisations to deliver aid, prolonging suffering. The UK will continue to do all it can to support humanitarian agencies to deliver the assistance required.

The conflict in Syria poses serious risks to UK interests, including the stability of the wider region, migration, and counter-terrorism. The UK government will continue to push for a negotiated political settlement to bring the people of Syria back together.

Notes to editors

- The EU and UN will host the "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" conference in Brussels between the 12 and 14 March 2019.
- Today's £400 million pledge for 2019 brings the total support to Syria and the region to £2.8 billion since 2012. Today's pledge includes an additional £100 million of UK aid, building on the £300 million previously allocated to spend in the Syria region in 2019.
- The pledge will also support the Shared UK Government Approach to Gender in Syria (Shared Approach), launched in March 2018. This commits the UK government to use UK programming and advocacy to contribute towards positive change for women and girls in Syria, by implementing minimum gender standards.