

Press release: Penny Mordaunt: Extra UK aid gives a future to persecuted Rohingya

On a visit to Cox's Bazar, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has announced further UK aid for the Rohingya crisis, as she warns that global funding will start to dry up in 100 days.

Ms Mordaunt pledged that the UK will continue to stand by the Rohingya people and Bangladesh, now and in the future. She met some of the 620,000 innocent men, women and children who have been tragically driven from their homes in Burma and forced to make the treacherous journey to Bangladesh, relying on aid to survive.

Today's announcement of £12 million for the Rohingya crisis is providing urgently needed food now and ensuring more lives are not put at risk when international funding starts to run out in February 2018. This brings the UK's total support to £59 million since 25 August 2017.

She praised the Government of Bangladesh and the local communities for their continued generosity in helping the Rohingya people and also urged other countries to follow the UK's lead by promising longer-term support to avert disaster.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

The persistent persecution of the Rohingya people must stop. It is horrifying that hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women and children have had their homes burnt to the ground, and parents have been forced to helplessly watch as their children die from hunger.

This looks like ethnic cleansing. The Burmese military must end this inhumane violence and guarantee unrestricted humanitarian access so aid can reach those in need in Burma. Any return of families to their homes must be safe, voluntary and dignified.

Global funding to support the Rohingya people will only meet urgent needs for the next 100 days – we cannot turn our backs on those trapped in crisis.

Other countries must follow our lead and do even more to help children overcome the trauma of war, reunite them with their families and give a future to the next generation.

To mark the International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Women and the 16 days of activism, the International Development Secretary is shining a spotlight on the horrifying prevalence of sexual and gender based violence

that Rohingya women and girls have suffered.

During her visit to Bangladesh, Ms Mordaunt heard harrowing stories of brutal abuse and met UK experts delivering life-saving treatment including medical, counselling and psychosocial support to female survivors.

She pledged to help increase protection for Rohingya women and girls against sexual violence and exploitation and announced a separate package of UK aid support (£12 million for multiple countries) that is expected to help around 750,000 women and girls globally over the next three years. Bangladesh could stand to benefit from this.

This will increase access to services such as legal assistance, healthcare for survivors of sexual and gender based violence and help protect women and girls by tackling the root causes of these crimes.

Ms Mordaunt said:

The countless stories of sexual violence I have heard from Rohingya women and girls are truly shocking and the high rates of this crime across the world are a global scandal.

The UK is absolutely determined to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and we are increasing protection for Rohingya women and girls against sexual violence and exploitation.

We are stepping up our leadership – working closely with women leaders and grassroots charities – to help more survivors in some of the world's poorest countries overcome the traumas of violence.

UK aid is helping to provide:

- Emergency food to 174,000 people
- Lifesaving nutritional support to more than 60,000 children under-five and over 21,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women
- Safe drinking water, emergency latrines and hygiene kits for more than 138,000 people
- Essential items including soap, cooking utensils and water cans for over 131,000 people
- Emergency shelter for over 130,000 people and support to make shelters more resilient to rain and heavy winds for 450,000 people as the cyclone season approaches
- Access to female bathing cubicles and sanitary items for more than 35,000 girls and women
- Counselling and psychological support for over 10,000 women suffering from the trauma of war and over 2,000 survivors of sexual violence
- Medical help for over 50,000 pregnant women to give birth safely.

UK leadership also helped to secure another \$300 million of international support at the landmark Geneva pledging conference on 23 October 2017. This reaches over half of the total funding required to meet urgent humanitarian

needs as set out in the UN appeal. However, the UN appeal only covers the months up to February 2018, and more international pledges are required to meet ongoing desperate need.

Notes to Editors:

1. Today's announcement of UK aid support for the Rohingya crisis includes £8 million of new funding for the Rohingya crisis from DFID's crisis reserve which will help ensure assistance – including helping improve security for women and girls – is sustained after the months covered by the UN appeal, and £4 million for the World Food Programme that has been allocated from DFID Bangladesh's existing budget and is already being used to provide food.
 2. DFID will also provide up to £12 million over three years (December 2017 – December 2020) to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women (UNTF), as announced on Saturday 25 November 2017. This will support local, national, regional and cross-border efforts to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women and girls in all contexts, including sexual violence in conflict areas. In 2016 around 250,000 women and girls benefitted directly from the Trust Fund's work.
 3. The UK is also leading the charge to reform the humanitarian system, to ensure the international community responds efficiently and effectively to crises, pooling resources together rather than competing and working in isolation.
 4. The events in Rakhine look like ethnic cleansing. The Burmese authorities need to stop the violence and ensure immediate access into northern Rakhine so that UK aid can provide a lifeline to those still suffering in Rakhine State. Unacceptable intimidation and restrictions on the movement of humanitarian workers must be ended. Burma must work with international partners to put in place the conditions that will allow people to return to their homes safely, with dignity and hope for the future.
 5. Recognising the unprecedented scale of the crisis in Bangladesh and Burma, the UK has been a leader in responding – in speed and size – providing an additional £59 million since August 2017 to help meet the urgent humanitarian needs of innocent men, women and children who have been forced to flee the relentless violence and atrocities in Burma, and make the treacherous journey to Bangladesh to seek refuge.
 6. This includes the UK Government matching pound for pound £5 million raised by the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Appeal for people fleeing the violence and destruction in Burma, doubling the impact of the public's own donations and ensuring that charities working on the ground can reach even more people in need.
-

News story: Review into harassment and intimidation near abortion clinics

Some women have been subjected to harassment and intimidating behaviour from protesters when visiting family planning clinics to seek information, advice and services from medical professionals.

The review will gather evidence from police forces, healthcare providers and local authorities to understand the scale and nature of these protests, before considering what further action the government can take to protect those using or working in abortion clinics. This could include bolstering existing or creating new police and civil powers.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

While everyone has a right to peaceful protest, it is completely unacceptable that anyone should feel harassed or intimidated simply for exercising their legal right to healthcare advice and treatment. The decision to have an abortion is already an incredibly personal one, without women being further pressured by aggressive protesters.

Let me be clear, this review is about ensuring the police, healthcare providers and local authorities have the right powers to protect women making these tough decisions. But this isn't to kick the issue into the long grass. The review will collect the detailed evidence and firm recommendations that allow us to take the right action to tackle this problem.

The law already provides protection against harassment and intimidation, and the police have a range of powers to manage protests. Like all members of the public, protesters are subject to the law and all suspected criminal offences will be robustly investigated and dealt with by the police.

But the review will see what more needs to be done and the Policing Minister Nick Hurd has written to the National Policing Lead for Protest, Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Swann to begin this work.

The review, to be conducted by Home Office officials, will also consider international comparisons, as similar protests have taken place in Australia, France and the United States.

News story: New powers for police to address illegal and unsafe use of drones

Police are set to be given powers to prevent the unsafe or criminal use of drones as part of a new package of legislation.

The measures are intended to allow drone users to continue flying safely and legally, helping to place the UK at the forefront of the fast-growing drone industry. This will also pave the way for the devices to be harnessed for a range of uses by businesses and public services.

Aviation Minister, Baroness Sugg meets PhD students working on drone technology at the Aerial Robotics Lab at Imperial College, London.

The draft Drone Bill, which will be published next spring, will give officers the right to order operators to ground drones where necessary. Officers will also be able to seize drone parts to prove it has been used to commit an offence.

New measures will also make it mandatory for drone owners to register to improve accountability. And drone operators will be required to use apps – so they can access the information needed to make sure any planned flight can be made safely and legally.

Banning drones from flying near airports or above 400 feet could also form part of the new regulations.

The news comes as funding for a pioneering new drones programme is announced to help cities shape the way this new technology operates and the benefits it brings.

Dr. Mirko Kovac of the Aerial Robotics Lab at Imperial College explaining drone technology to Baroness Sugg.

Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg said:

Drones have great potential and we want to do everything possible to harness the benefits of this technology as it develops.

But if we are to realise the full potential of this incredibly exciting technology, we have to take steps to stop illegal use of these devices and address safety and privacy concerns.

These new laws strike a balance, to allow the vast majority of drone users to continue flying safely and responsibly, while also paving the way for drone technology to revolutionise businesses and public services.

The government will publish the draft Drone Bill for consultation and introduce secondary legislation amendments in spring 2018. Changes to the Air Navigation Order will mean that that mean:

- drone users will have to sit safety awareness tests
- users of drones weighing 250 grams and over will in future have to be registered

The government is also working closely with drone manufacturers to use geo-fencing to prevent drones from entering restricted zones.

The Flying High Challenge, funded by the government and run by Nesta in partnership with Innovate UK, is set to launch tomorrow (Monday, 27 November) when cities will be invited to register their interest.

Up to 5 cities will be supported in the research and development of drone technology which could transform critical services in – for example, emergency health services and organ transport, essential infrastructure assessment and repair, and parcel delivery and logistics.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Criminal Misuse of Drones, Assistant Chief Constable Serena Kennedy said:

Police forces are aware of the ever increasing use of drones by members of the public and we are working with all relevant partners to understand the threats that this new technology can pose when used irresponsibly or illegally. Do not take this lightly – if you use a drone to invade people's privacy or engage in disruptive behaviour, you could face serious criminal charges.

Police officers will use all available powers to investigate reports of criminal misuse of drones and seek the appropriate penalty. Make sure you know the rules for using a drone because it is always your responsibility to ensure that you are acting within the law and in line with the Civil Aviation Authority's Drone Code.

Tim Johnson, Policy Director at the CAA said:

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) supports the safe development of drones in the UK. Drones can bring economic and workplace safety benefits but to achieve those we need everyone flying a drone now to do so safely. We welcome plans to increase drone operator training, safety awareness and the creation of no-fly zones.

We have been working with Government and the aviation and drone industries to educate drone operators by successfully promoting the [Dronecode](#) , which provides an easy to follow guide to UK drone rules.

Press release: PM call with President Sisi of Egypt: 25 Nov 2017

The Prime Minister spoke to President Sisi of Egypt earlier this evening.

The Prime Minister offered her personal condolences and the condolences of the British people for the barbaric attack that took place at al-Rawdah mosque in north Sinai yesterday.

They spoke about the attack being a terrible example of the threat Egypt faces and the Prime Minister reassured President Sisi that the UK stands ready to help in any way possible.

They agreed that terrorism was an international problem and that it was important for countries to work closely together and share expertise to counter the growing threat of terrorism around the world. They welcomed continued bilateral cooperation in this area.

Speech: Culture Secretary Karen Bradley's Cultural Relations Award speech

Thank you for inviting me here this evening. It is a pleasure to join you, in this beautiful building, designed of course by the talented late Dame Zaha Hadid.

Where better to celebrate our two countries' shared cultural heritage than in a British-designed building here in the heart of Rome?

The UK has rich and longstanding cultural ties with Italy.

Our ancient Roman heritage is found across the whole country, from Hadrian's Wall to the baths of – well – Bath. Italy provides the setting – and in two cases the title – of some of Shakespeare's greatest plays. I'll let you remember which two yourselves. It inspired our great Romantic poets, Byron, Shelley and Keats – in fact the last two are buried here in Rome – and painters from Turner to Hockney.

And these strong ties continue today. One of the highlights of the modern London skyline – in every sense – is the Shard, by an Italian architect,

Renzo Piano. The great Italian fashion houses shape what we British wear, filtering down from the catwalk to the high street.

Last year, more than three million Britons chose to holiday here in Italy, such is our love for this country and its people.

And I'm pleased to say it's a two way exchange.

Two million of you visited the UK last year, and beyond that, over 600,000 Italians currently live, study and do business there.

I know much of British culture – from Shakespeare to The Beatles and beyond – is as well loved here as it is at home. Most recently, British design has shaped the tech you all use every day – particularly the iconic work of Sir Jony Ive for Apple.

Yesterday, I visited the Venice Biennale and was pleased to see the work of so many talented British artists on display.

I particularly enjoyed the work of Phyllida Barlow, selected as this year's artist for the British Pavilion, and would like to congratulate the British Council on their excellent job in managing the British Pavilion in Venice, as they have since 1938.

I'd also like to thank Her Majesty's Ambassador, Jill Morris, for such a wonderful concert at the residence last night, and for all her hard work in maintaining and strengthening cultural relations between the UK and Italy.

We want those ties to deepen. Britain may be leaving the EU, but we are not leaving Europe, nor our friends in Europe.

I met this morning with my counterpart in Italy, Dario Franceschini, and we confirmed how committed both our governments are to continued collaboration on matters of culture and heritage.

My own department in the UK has recently changed its name to become the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, to reflect the growing importance of digital technologies to culture and the creative industries.

We are living through a technological revolution as profound as any that has gone before. We all know that new technologies can be disruptive, and that we need to stay aware of the challenges ahead, but this digital revolution offers enormous opportunities too, not least for the cultural and heritage sectors. For promotion, for collaboration, and perhaps most significantly to engage with a size and breadth of audience unimaginable only a few years ago.

I am well aware how privileged I am to have seen what I have seen on this trip, and that not everyone gets the chance. But there is less and less reason for our shared cultural heritage to only be available to the few.

Last year in the UK, we published a new Culture White Paper, the first comprehensive review of the sector in fifty years. It set out this Government's vision for helping the arts and culture to thrive, and put

particular emphasis on widening access for people from all walks of life.

Access to the arts can be so transformative. We all know it only takes one song to inspire a singer, one painting to inspire an artist.

But often – though, of course, not always – the most thoughtful, well crafted art is shut away in institutions that people believe are not for them, or that are simply too far away to visit.

Digitising museum collections and publishing them online opens them up to bigger, more diverse audiences than ever before. It brings once unreachable – or plain intimidating – art right to the phones people carry in their pockets.

And those who've done it, who've put their collections online, tell me that far from replacing physical footfall it actually drives up visitor numbers.

It's great for curation too, particularly now academic collaboration is becoming the global norm. Put an image of an object online, and all the world's experts can comment and share their knowledge.

So I see this as very much the road ahead. One of the greatest advantages of the digital age is better connectivity. Let's use these new technologies to aid collaboration, and to open our shared cultural heritage to everyone in our societies, so a work sited in London can be easily enjoyed in Naples, and those in Rome can be accessed from Birmingham.

This award, which it is my honour to present, is a fitting celebration of the close and fruitful cultural collaboration between the UK and Italy. I look forward to helping to strengthen that bond and to building ever closer ties, and more effective collaboration between our countries.