

The UK stands by Lebanon and its people in time of need

World news story

The UK remains a long-standing friend of Lebanon and its people including in times of need, said Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer, during his visit to Beirut



Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer in Beirut

As the UK's most senior military officer for the Middle East, he met Lebanese Army Commander General Joseph Aoun and stressed that the UK stands in full solidarity with the people of Lebanon after the explosion in Beirut port last week. British Ambassador Chris Rampling and Defence Attaché, Lieutenant Colonel Alex Hilton accompanied him.

General Lorimer visited the port of Beirut coinciding with the arrival of Royal Navy survey ship HMS Enterprise to the shores of Beirut as part of a wide-ranging package of military support, which had been announced by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace on August 6. He was accompanied by Royal Navy experts who had been working with the British Embassy, ahead of HMS Enterprise's deployment.

The UK pledged a further £20 million in urgent humanitarian support during Sunday's virtual summit of world leaders, bringing the total amount of UK funding in the wake of the crisis to £25 million. The UK has been one of the biggest donors to the crisis.

At the end of his visit, General Lorimer said:

I offer my deepest condolences to the people of Lebanon following the enormous explosion that rocked the whole country causing immense suffering and damage.

The deployment of HMS Enterprise complements an immediate package of military and civilian support. As part of the strong relationship between both our armies, the UK has offered enhanced support to the Lebanese Armed Forces, who are central to the Government of Lebanon's response, including tailored medical help, strategic air transport assistance, and engineering and communications support.

The UK is a proud partner and friend of Lebanon and will continue to stand by its people including in times of need.

British Ambassador Chris Rampling said:

The explosion at the Port of Beirut was an unspeakable tragedy, that killed and injured so many, and has caused so much further pain for Lebanon and its people. I know that Lebanese remain at the forefront of the thoughts of the British people.

The immediate £5 million package of humanitarian and medical support – and the further £20 million announced by the Secretary of State for International Development on Sunday, as well as the technical experts who are already on the ground – will help to address some of the most critical needs of the most vulnerable in Lebanon. And our military support to the Lebanese Army in their effort to rebuild the port is also critical. These are two of the key pillars to helping Lebanon to pass through this terrible time.

The UK has stood with Lebanon for many years, and continues to do so in its time of most urgent need.

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