

Hostilities have driven record levels of need in Syria: UK Statement at the UN Security Council

I'd like to start by thanking Special Envoy Geir Pedersen, Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya and Ms Nirvana Shawky for their valuable briefings.

The Syrian conflict continues to have a profound impact on the Syrian population.

Hostilities have driven record levels of need, with 14.6 million Syrians, 80% of the population, requiring humanitarian assistance.

The monthly cost of food has reached an all-time high, exacerbated by the impact of Russia's premeditated and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

The Council needs to support the UN in its efforts to assist millions of Syrians.

The Secretary-General has highlighted the continued life-saving importance of the UN's cross-border mandate, due for renewal in July.

In the past few years, when this Council has, regrettably, closed border crossings, needs have increased.

Without the mandate, another generation of women and girls, as outlined powerfully by Nirvana Shawky today, will face increased suffering.

Access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services would be severely hit and survivors of gender-based violence will not get the support they need.

The UK therefore supports both the renewal and expansion of the UN's cross-border mandate.

For our part, we have worked to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 2585.

UK support for early recovery over the past six months has provided agricultural training and inputs for livestock and vegetable production, and provided apprenticeships and small business grants to help create jobs and address market gaps.

We urge all Council Members to support the UN's cross-border mandate in July.

Indeed, as the Secretary-General clearly states, the Council has a 'moral and humanitarian imperative' to do so.

But we should also be clear that cross-border assistance alone is not enough.

The UK continues to support the UN-facilitated, Syrian-led process outlined within UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

UN Special Envoy Pedersen has the UK's full support in for his continued efforts to facilitate a sustainable resolution to the conflict.