

Minister for Africa statement on first aid delivery to Tigray since mid-December

News story

Minister for Africa Vicky Ford has issued a statement following the first delivery of aid to the Tigray region of Ethiopia since mid-December.



Credit: World Food Programme

Commenting on the first delivery of aid reaching Tigray since mid-December, Minister for Africa Vicky Ford said:

The conflict in northern Ethiopia has caused immense harm and suffering to more than 9 million people since it began in November 2020. Millions of civilians have been forced to flee their homes and more people are facing famine-like conditions in the region today than the rest of the world combined.

The arrival of today's humanitarian convoy in Tigrayan controlled areas, the first since mid-December, is a welcome development and comes at a critical point in this dreadful conflict. These aid trucks, more than a quarter of which are directly funded by the UK, will help to replenish severely depleted stocks of fuel and food. The deliveries should also pave the way for humanitarian agencies to resume the provision of further urgent aid to communities that have gone without support for far too long.

Since July last year there has been almost negligible access to Tigray. The violence has made accessing vulnerable people in Tigray complex and dangerous for humanitarian agencies. Relief workers have been killed, harassed and consistently obstructed. The UK commends their bravery and perseverance.

The UK also recognises the urgent needs of communities in Afar, many of whom have been forced to flee their homes due to the fighting. We acknowledge the important role the Afar authorities have played, alongside the Government of Ethiopia and the authorities in Tigray, in facilitating today's convoy and prioritising the welfare of civilians

Throughout this conflict, the UK has requested that all armed actors provide unfettered humanitarian access for aid agencies. We have called out abuses by all sides to the conflict and committed more than £75 million of aid to those affected in the Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions.

The UK is committed to working with all actors in northern Ethiopia to bring the conflict to a close and to promote long-term peace and development.

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