

New Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office will lead global action to ensure world's poorest are protected from ravages of coronavirus and famine

The UK will lead a global call to action to protect the world's poorest people from coronavirus and the increasing threat of famine, the Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced today (2 September 2020).

- Foreign Secretary urges countries to step up alongside the UK to fight back against coronavirus and growing risk of famine in developing countries.
- UK announces a new £119m aid package to combat threat of coronavirus and famine as it takes on the G7 and COP26 Presidencies.
- Dominic Raab appoints former Department for International Development Acting Permanent Secretary, Nick Dyer, as UK's first Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs.

The coronavirus pandemic, conflict, locust swarms and climate change have left 250 million people worldwide facing extreme hunger this year, with parts of Yemen, South Sudan and Burkina Faso on the brink of famine. Without international attention, many more will die from hunger and disease, and the pandemic will continue to spread in developing countries and to the wider world.

As the new Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) is inaugurated today, the Foreign Secretary pledged to use the UK's diplomatic levers and aid expertise to build a stronger international consensus to fight back against the devastating impacts of coronavirus, conflict and climate change.

The UK will commit a new £119 million aid package to tackle the combined threat of coronavirus and famines, which is expected to help alleviate extreme hunger for over 6 million people in Yemen, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Central African Republic, the Sahel, South Sudan and Sudan.

Alongside the aid package, Dominic Raab has appointed [Nick Dyer](#) as the UK's first Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs to work in partnership with other donors, UN agencies, NGOs and foundations to help prevent catastrophic famine.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Coronavirus and famine threaten millions in some of the world's poorest countries, and give rise to direct problems that affect the UK, including terrorism and migration flows.

Global Britain, as a force for good in the world, is leading by example and bringing the international community together to tackle these deadly threats, because it's the right thing to do and it protects British interests.

We can only tackle these global challenges by combining our diplomatic strength with our world-leading aid expertise.

As the UK takes on the presidencies of the G7 and COP26, the Foreign Secretary will urge other countries to step up and help the developing world, as it faces a series of devastating challenges.

The UK is already leading the way in the international search to find a coronavirus vaccine and has committed to equitable access for all to a successful vaccine, treatments and tests. It is the largest donor to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which is helping to make sure the poorest countries can access any Covid-19 vaccine.

In addition, the UK will continue to use its seat on the UN Security Council to call for life-saving humanitarian access for everyone who needs it and hold countries to account on their international legal obligations to allow aid workers to operate impartially in conflict zones.

The UK has committed to spending 0.7% of our national income on aid, and the formation of the FCDO today will make sure our diplomatic influence and development expertise are combined to the best effect on the global stage.

The ongoing Integrated Review will inform the strategic priorities of the new department, to make sure UK aid and diplomatic efforts are a force for good and support the national interest.

Notes to editors

- The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office pursues our national interests and projects the UK as a force for good in the world. We promote the interests of British citizens, safeguard the UK's security, defend our values, reduce poverty and tackle global challenges with our international partners.
- The United Nations World Food Programme warns that over 250 million people in developing countries could face severe hunger this year. Parts of Yemen, South Sudan and Burkina Faso are at risk of famine.
- Today's aid package is expected to:
 - help alleviate extreme hunger for over 6 million people in Yemen, the DRC, Somalia, Central African Republic, the Sahel and Sudan;
 - help tackle extreme hunger in North East Nigeria by providing around 240,000 people with food for three months
 - reduce malnutrition and child mortality across the Sahel, the Horn of

- Africa, Nigeria, Mali, Malawi, Bangladesh, Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan and Afghanistan, through a new partnership with UNICEF to provide life-saving nutrition services to mothers and children; and
- ensure vulnerable Afghans, who have faced shortages because of conflict, drought and the economic impacts of coronavirus, have enough money to be able to buy food for their families.
 - The UK has so far pledged £774 million of aid to support the global effort to combat coronavirus.