

# News story: UK boosts Africa ties after ministerial visit

The Armed Forces Minister hailed Uganda's significant contribution to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and pledged that the UK will continue to support.

Minister for Armed Forces Mark Lancaster said:

Our defence relationship with Uganda is very strong and we recognise the exceptional contribution they are making towards bringing stability to East Africa, particularly through AMISOM. We share their desire for peace in the region and are looking at ways we can provide further assistance to this cause.

Currently, the UK assists Uganda's AMISOM deployment by training around 6,000 members of the Uganda People's Defence Force each year, coupled with places on focused courses at regional Peace Support Training Centres.

Uganda also plays a significant role in South Sudan its direct neighbour to the north, where the UK has contributed to the UN Mission (UNMISS) with the construction of a field hospital in Bentiu for peacekeepers.

During the visit, Mr Lancaster met with the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, with UK contribution to AMISOM and UNMISS high on the agenda. He had further office calls with the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs Adolf Mwesige and Foreign Affairs Minister Sam Kutesa.

The troops providing the AMISOM training are mainly reserves and the minister, who is himself a reserve, also thanked them for their contributions.

Minister for Armed Forces Mark Lancaster said:

Reservists form an integral component of our Armed Forces, providing a wide range of skills which are vital to the work we do. These men and women have bravely volunteered their time to make a difference towards one of the most impoverished and dangerous countries on the planet.