

# Press release: 3000 people gather to mark the centenary of the Battle of Amiens

- The UK Government hosted the event, in collaboration with the governments of Australia, Canada, France and the US
- In a speech at Amiens Cathedral, The Duke of Cambridge pays tribute to those who served in the battle one hundred years ago

More than 3,000 people gathered in France today to mark the centenary of the Battle of Amiens and the start of the Hundred Days Offensive, the final period of the First World War.

His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge joined Prime Minister Theresa May at the ceremony in Amiens Cathedral to remember those who fought in the battle.

Two thousand guests watched the service from inside the Cathedral, including hundreds of descendants of those who fought. A further 1,200 members of the public watched from the Cathedral square.

In a speech, HRH The Duke of Cambridge paid tribute to those who served in the battle one hundred years ago and the cooperation between the Allied nations.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The Battle of Amiens was the turning point which hastened the final, decisive chapter of the First World War.

A hundred years on, today's ceremony is a fitting moment to remember those who sacrificed their lives, and reflect on our shared past, present and future.

Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright said:

The Battle of Amiens marked the beginning of the end of the First World War. It was a crucial step in securing the Allies' victory in November 2018.

Today, we have come together as friends to remember those who fought and to reflect on the sacrifices they made.

On 8 August 1918, the Allied armies, made up of British, Australian, Canadian, French and American forces, advanced over seven miles on the first day of the Battle of Amiens, one of the greatest advances of the war.

The battle demonstrated how the Allies had learned lessons from previous campaigns and combined the use of infantry, artillery, tanks and aircraft to devastating effect.

Amiens also marked the start of the Hundred Days Offensive that won the war sooner than had previously been thought possible. The opening day of the battle was described by the German General Erich Ludendorff as the black day of the German Army.

After today's ceremony, in a moment that reaffirmed the bonds of friendship and peace between nations, His Royal Highness, the Prime Minister, along with representatives from France, Germany, Australia, Canada, the US and Ireland laid flowers in the Chapel of the Allies in the Cathedral. Flags that were presented to the Bishop of Amiens by the Allied nations after the Battle have remained in the chapel ever since.

His Royal Highness and the Prime Minister also met a number of descendants of those who fought at Amiens.

### **Notes to Editors:**

For further information please contact Faye Jackson in the DCMS Press Office on [faye.jackson@culture.gov.uk](mailto:faye.jackson@culture.gov.uk) or + 44 (0)7788 345 722

Read and download the [Amiens Official Commemorative Programme](#)

Details of the representatives who attended from the other nations who laid posies:

- Madame Florence Parly, Minister for the Armed Forces
- His Excellency, Mr Joachim Gauck, former President of the Federal Republic of Germany
- The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Canada
- The Honourable Darren Chester MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Defence Personnel and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of Anzac, Australia
- Her Excellency Ms Patricia O'Brien, Ambassador of Ireland to France
- Kristina Kvien, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Paris