

Press release: Alistair Burt visits Bangladesh

International Development Minister Alistair Burt has led talks on the situation in Rakhine State with key individuals in Bangladesh to step up efforts to end violence against Rohingya and allow humanitarian access to those in need.

Along with Foreign Office Minister Mark Field the successful series of talks held yesterday (Thursday, 28 September) with government officials and aid agencies centred on how best to provide further lifesaving support to the large influx of refugees in Bangladesh.

Yesterday's discussions follow talks that Minister Burt held in Thailand with the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, where he pushed for a greater regional response to the violence in Rakhine state and issues of humanitarian access.

Since the violence erupted on 25 August more than half a million Rohingya men, women and children have been forced to flee Rakhine State and have sought refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. The UK has announced an extra £30 million to meet urgent humanitarian needs and is determined to do its very best and what is necessary to help those that are displaced.

Alistair Burt, Minister for International Development said:

The violence in Burma in the last month has forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya men, women and children to flee their homes, livelihoods and loved ones.

UK aid is already making a difference on the ground in Bangladesh, but I urge the Burmese authorities to allow aid workers immediate and full access so we can deliver vital support to those living in fear and desperation.

The UK government has so far provided food for 65,000 of the most vulnerable victims, health care for 50,000 of them, and emergency shelter for up to 26,355.

We are also helping 7,500 children, many of whom have suffered traumatic ordeals, including sexual violence.

The UK is leading the way in the humanitarian relief effort, and it is now up to the rest of the world to follow our lead in helping the Rohingyas, not just now but in the long-term.