

# Press release: Fresh UK aid for humanitarian crises in 2018, as International Development Secretary warns it could be even “bleaker” than 2017

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt today announced a new package of support for humanitarian crises in the coming year, after UK aid delivered life-saving support to millions of people around the world and averted two famines in 2017.

In early 2017 the United Nations warned that the world was facing its worst humanitarian crisis since 1945. Ms Mordaunt says today that 2018 could be even worse with ongoing famines and conflicts in Yemen, South Sudan and Burma.

The new UK aid package will give a £21 million boost to the United Nations' Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) so agencies can respond even more quickly to under-funded emergencies around the world in 2018.

It will help to provide critical health services to 20 million people, plus clean water and sanitation to 13 million people and food to 9 million people.

The UK package is part of a wider international relief effort. Globally, the United Nations estimates that in 2018 some 136 million people in 25 countries will be in need of humanitarian assistance.

The UK is ready to deliver life-saving aid to those that need it most.

During 2017, UK aid has helped prevented famines in Nigeria and Somalia, as well as alleviating untold suffering in South Sudan and Yemen. We achieved this by providing:

- 1.8 million people in Yemen with food, 300,000 with safe water and 250,000 with medical treatment
- 1.6 million people in Somalia with food, 1.1 million with safe water and 700,000 with medical treatment
- 1 million people in northeast Nigeria with food assistance and 500,000 with safe water
- 500,000 people in South Sudan with food, 300,000 with safe water and 100,000 with medical treatment

In addition, this year UK aid delivered 827 tonnes of supplies in response to hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Caribbean. It also provided emergency shelter to 130,000 people affected by the Rohingya crisis and medical support for more than 1 million people in Syria.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

While 2017 was a year of harrowing humanitarian crises, the truth is 2018 could be even bleaker.

When we see suffering, we instinctively want to help. Britons are big-hearted, open-minded and far-sighted – qualities that define a great nation.

This year, through UK aid and further public donations, we helped avert famines in Nigeria and Somalia, gave emergency help to the survivors of the Caribbean hurricanes and provided a vital life-line to people suffering from conflict in Syria and Yemen.

Britain is giving life saving aid, but also hope, to millions of people around the world. In the challenges 2018 brings Britain will continue to be at the forefront of the global humanitarian response.

Ms Mordaunt also announced –ongoing support for people driven from their homes as a result of the conflict in Syria, which is in its seventh year. The UK aid package will give money directly to Syrian refugees living in Lebanon, so they can decide how best to look after their families.

The programme, delivered by the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), will help stamp out child labour by providing more than 10,0000 families with an allowance so that they can buy essential food, shelter, household supplies and medical assistance.

## **Notes to Editors**

1. Today's announcement will provide an additional £21m support for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) so that it can respond to under-funded emergencies even more quickly. This funding is in addition to the UK's core funding allocation of £55m to CERF in 2017.
2. CERF provides an efficient and effective way to provide additional resources rapidly in response to humanitarian crises. It has recently saved lives in Syria, responded to famine in East Africa and supported people suffering violence from Boko Haram.
3. Lebanon is host to more refugees relative to its own population than any other country. It currently hosts around 1.5 million Syrians, as well as 300,000 Palestinians.