

Press release: Sir Mark Lowcock confirmed as next UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

The United Nations Secretary General today announced that Stephen O'Brien will be succeeded as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA) by Sir Mark Lowcock. In taking up the post, Sir Mark will leave his position as Permanent Secretary at the Department for International Development (DFID).

Responding to the announcement Rt Hon Priti Patel, Secretary of State for International Development, said:

I would like to thank Stephen O'Brien for his outstanding leadership of OCHA and the reform he has brought to improve our global responses to humanitarian crises. He has worked tirelessly for the benefit of the United Nations and for the cause of humanitarian relief across the world.

I wish Mark Lowcock every success in the future in his role as Under-Secretary-General for OCHA. I would like to thank him for his long standing service to the Civil Service and his work to deliver DFID's commitments to the poorest people in the world.

Sir Jeremy Heywood, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, added:

I am delighted that Mark Lowcock has been appointed to this critical UN role. Mark has been an outstanding Permanent Secretary of DFID and a great colleague. With humanitarian crises right now affecting so many parts of the world, Mark will bring long-standing practical expertise and British know-how to this important international position.

Sir Mark Lowcock said:

It has been an enormous privilege to serve DFID for the last thirty-two years, especially as Permanent Secretary since 2011. And I cannot imagine anything more worthwhile than joining the Secretary General's new team to realise the inspiring vision he has set for the United Nations.

I am particularly looking forward to building on Stephen O'Brien's excellent legacy in ensuring OCHA does the best it possibly can to

relieve the suffering of people whose lives continue to be devastated by humanitarian crises across the world.

Arrangements for Sir Mark's successor at DFID will be announced shortly.