

Press release: UK aid to fly heavy-lifting gear to cyclone-hit airport in Mozambique

The UK is due to send forklift trucks and other cargo handling equipment to cyclone-hit Mozambique, to help quickly unload aid from planes and cut the time it takes to get relief items to those in need, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt announced today (22 March).

The flight, which is scheduled to leave from Doncaster-Sheffield airport for Maputo on Sunday (24 March), is in addition to a flight containing over 7,500 shelter kits and 100 family tents which arrived in Mozambique earlier this week.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

We are only just beginning to see the true impact of this devastating cyclone. Sadly, much of the infrastructure at airports and other buildings has either been destroyed or washed away.

UK aid is now in the region worst hit by the cyclone. A plane is due to leave from the UK over the weekend to support the relief operation. It will contain forklifts, lifting platforms and other airfield equipment to help aid workers move supplies from the airport to the worst-hit towns and villages.

It is right that the UK, the biggest global donor and one of the first to respond to the crisis, does all it can to provide life-saving assistance to those desperately in need. Other countries must now step up to relieve the suffering of the hundreds of thousands of people left homeless or without food.

The flight is expected to contain:

- forklift trucks, floodlights, lifting platforms and other airfield equipment; and
- other relief items for those in need, including water purifiers and shelter kits.

A flight containing 80 family tents which can each accommodate a family of five, arrived into Beira last night (21 March). The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) will distribute these to affected communities.

Following the British public's generosity to the Disaster Emergency Committee's appeal, which has now raised £8 million for Cyclone Idai victims, the UK will match pound-for-pound a further £2 million of donations. This new

support, in addition the previous £2 million the UK agreed to aid match, will double the impact of the public's own donations. This takes the UK's support for the DEC appeal to £4 million, and total response to the crisis to £22 million.

DFID has also sent additional humanitarian experts from the UK to support the UK's response on the ground. They will help the teams in the region to assess needs and coordinate relief efforts.

UK aid has also supported the World Food Programme to deliver airdrops of high-energy biscuits to isolated pockets of people stranded by floodwaters in Beira. UK support is also delivering easy-to-prepare fortified food to displaced families sheltering in schools and other public buildings in the town of Dondo.

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