

Prime Minister announces crucial winter kit delivery for Ukrainian Forces as he meets NATO Chief

- The Prime Minister will welcome the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, to Downing Street today
- Ahead of the UK's Integrated Review refresh, the visit will cement the UK's ongoing support for NATO and discuss how the alliance can evolve to meet continued and new threats
- It comes as the Prime Minister announces the UK will send a further 12,000 extreme cold weather sleeping kits and 150 heated tents to help the Armed Forces of Ukraine as the temperatures plummet in the country

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will host the NATO Secretary General in Downing Street today (Wednesday) to discuss the future of security and deterrence in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Jens Stoltenberg will be the first international leader the Prime Minister has hosted at 10 Downing Street since he took office last month.

The leaders are expected to discuss the ongoing war in Ukraine and how best allies can support their courageous defence. They will also look to the future of the NATO alliance and how we can ensure it is fighting fit for generations to come.

The meeting will be an opportunity for to discuss the UK's ongoing update to the Integrated Review. The update builds on the strategy published last year which highlighted NATO's central role in the UK's defence. The UK is the largest European contributor to NATO, and has committed both our aircraft carrier and our nuclear capability to the alliance.

Ahead of the visit, the Prime Minister has announced the UK will provide a package of winter kit to the Ukrainian Armed Forces to assist as they defend their country in gruelling winter conditions. NATO allies have been at the forefront of global support for Ukraine, after Russia's invasion permanently shifted the dial on both Euro-Atlantic security and global relations.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said:

NATO is the cornerstone of our security, and the security of our allies. As the war in Ukraine continues to rage, we must not take peace at home for granted.

I am determined the UK will be the bedrock of NATO for generations to come. But in order to face the challenges future we must evolve as an Alliance to meet, and remain ahead of, the threat from our adversaries.

We must also continue backing the Ukrainian people in their resistance to Putin's brutality. I'm pleased that UK-donated kit will be keeping the Ukrainian Armed Forces warm and safe as they face a perilous winter fighting for their country.

The Secretary General will arrive at Downing Street after visiting Ukrainian troops at Lydd Army Camp as part of Operation Interflex – the training programme for the Ukrainian Armed Forces pioneered by the UK. The recruits are being put through their paces by UK military trainers, ensuring they are front-line-ready as the Armed Forces of Ukraine continue to push back Russian invaders.

The Secretary General's visit comes as the Prime Minister announces that the UK will send a further 12,000 sleeping kits and 150 heated tents to help Ukrainian troops fight through the winter.

The UK is set to deliver more than 25,000 sets of extreme cold weather clothing by mid-December, ensuring troops are able to operate and survive the plunging temperatures in Ukraine.

The extreme cold weather kits are in addition to more than 7,000 sets of normal cold weather kit distributed to recruits on Operation Interflex.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

With winter fast approaching, this equipment will ensure that the Armed Forces of Ukraine are able to operate effectively through the next few months. Alongside our training programme and the provision of lethal aid, it demonstrates our commitment to making sure that the basic Ukrainian soldier is well trained, well equipped and given the best possible chance to fight and determine their own future.