

Press release: UK to increase Syria medical aid in wake of chemical attack

The International Development Secretary announced additional funding today (09/04/2017), which will ensure health workers on the ground in Syria can deliver healthcare and essential medicines across the country; enabling them to prepare for future medical emergencies.

Global Britain has been at the forefront of the response to the Syria crisis, and we continue to lead international efforts by providing additional emergency medical support to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people.

This allocation builds on existing UK support to the World Health Organisation, which has enabled it to pre-position supplies and train medics in anticipation of an attack of this kind. As a result, WHO was able to rapidly deliver medicines including Atropine (an antidote for some types of chemical exposure) and steroids for treatment, ship in additional medicines, and provide immediate support to medics.

The new support from the UK will go to three NGOs on the ground and will provide a wider range of lifesaving medical aid right across Syria, including:

- access to clean water for 500,000 people for drinking and sanitation, to help prevent the spread of disease and sickness;
- medicines, medical supplies and equipment including basic surgical supplies such as sutures and pain medications for 340 primary health clinics and 69 hospitals;
- 1 million primary health care consultations, along with more than 30,000 mental health and psychosocial consultations for traumatised people; and
- training for more than 400 Syrian health workers responding to the ongoing conflict.

Priti Patel said:

This was a brutal and indiscriminate attack. Unleashing the horror of chemical weapons on women, children and the defenceless is not only utterly deplorable, but it is the mark of a craven coward.

Those responsible must be held to account. And the victims must get the help they so desperately need – that is why we are providing further medical support not only for those subjected to the horrors of chemical attack, but for those countless victims of the equally deadly bombs, bullets and diseases that are devastating lives across Syria.

It is vital that the international community continues to support the Syrian people and the UK led calls at the Brussels Conference on Syria this week for

donors to step up assistance to the most vulnerable people. As a result, \$6 billion in international funding was committed for the coming year.

Notes to editors

1. The new allocation of funding to WHO and two other undisclosed NGOs totals £7 million. It will support ongoing delivery of medicines and basic supplies to primary health clinics to treat minor illnesses, infections, chronic conditions and mental illnesses; primary healthcare and mental health support; and clean water and sanitation programming in Idlib.
2. It builds on £10.7 million provided to WHO last financial year (2016/17). WHO has been advised that any remaining UK funding from last year can be used flexibly as necessary in its ongoing response to the chemical attack.

[News story: Trade unions to face new fines of up to £20,000 for breaking governance laws](#)

Trade unions are set to face new fines of up to £20,000 for breaking governance laws under plans being consulted on by the government.

Under the proposals, the union regulator, the [Certification Officer](#), will be able to issue fines of up to £20,000 for breaking the law including serious breaches of election rules or mismanagement of their political funds.

Currently the Certification Officer cannot impose a financial penalty, instead issuing a declaration or an enforcement order if a union breaches its statutory obligations under the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act.

The new proposed powers the Certification Officer will be able to fine unions for breaches like:

- failing to ensure senior positions are not held by someone with a criminal record
- breaching requirements for elections to senior positions
- mismanagement of political funds

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said:

Trade unions exist to represent workers' interests and make decisions which can affect millions of people's lives, so it is right for the government to ensure they are run responsibly.

The proposed powers will make sure unions are properly regulated in the future to ensure they truly represent the interests of their members.

The government is consulting on these powers as agreed during the passage of the Trade Union Act last year.

The majority of the Act's new powers came into force on 1 March, bringing in tougher ballot requirements for industrial action – particularly for important public services like health, education and transport.

This will save more than 1.5 million working hours a year from being lost to undemocratic strike action.

The [consultation on the Certification Officer's powers](#) will run for 6 weeks from 9 April until 21 May.

1. The Certification Officer is responsible for regulating statutory functions relating to trade unions and employers' associations.
2. The Certification Officer's complaint rulings are published online.
3. The Trade Union Act which came into force on 1 March, is expected to reduce strikes:
 - on important public services like transport, education and health by 35%
 - in all other sectors from construction to water supply by 29%

[News story: The AAIB have sent a team to a glider accident in Northumberland](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The AAIB have sent a team to Northumberland to investigate an accident involving a glider.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on Moscow visit](#)

The Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, has decided not to visit Moscow as planned on 10 April.

Developments in Syria have changed the situation fundamentally. My priority is now to continue contact with the US and others in the run up to the G7 meeting on 10-11 April – to build coordinated international support for a ceasefire on the ground and an intensified political process. I will be working to arrange for other like-minded partners to meet and explore next steps soon too.

I discussed these plans in detail with Secretary Tillerson. He will visit Moscow as planned and, following the G7 meeting, will be able to deliver that clear and co-ordinated message to the Russians.

We deplore Russia's continued defence of the Asad regime even after the chemical weapons attack on innocent civilians. We call on Russia to do everything possible to bring about a political settlement in Syria and work with the rest of the international community to ensure that the shocking events of the last week are never repeated.

Press release: Joint statement: India-UK energy for growth partnership

India's Minister for Power, New & Renewable Energy, Coal and Mines, Piyush Goyal, and the UK's Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Greg Clark, took forward the commitment of their Prime Ministers for an enhanced Energy for Growth Partnership between the two countries.

The ministers noted over 30 years of UK-India collaboration on energy spanning investment, research, policy, technical and commercial partnerships in the power, renewables, energy efficiency, civil nuclear and oil and gas sectors. The ministers reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen energy cooperation between India and the UK.

Minister Goyal welcomed the UK's ongoing technical assistance and climate financing. The two ministers welcomed the current large scale private sector investments between the two countries in the area of energy.

The UK is the largest G20 investor in India with large investments in energy. India is the third largest source of FDI projects in the UK including in the energy sector. They welcomed the productive discussions of the business round tables held as part of the energy dialogue in which opportunities for new partnerships were explored and they expressed their commitment to deepen business to business engagement including efforts to enhance technological collaboration.

Looking forward, they explored opportunities for new bilateral cooperation on shared strategic energy priorities such as security, affordability and sustainability. Secretary of State Clark announced up to £20m of additional

technical assistance funding under the Energy for Growth partnership to support priority areas for collaboration on power, renewables, energy access and efficiency and oil and gas.

On power and renewable energy, the two ministers agreed that priorities will include helping India's power sector companies introduce smart technology to improve performance and reduce losses; support for increased energy efficiency; and work to accelerate deployment of renewable energy including through support at state level on planning for renewable energy. This will build on the existing £10m Power Sector Reform Programme that is focusing on efficient, reliable and sustainable electricity supply, increasing integration of renewable energy into the grid and improving energy access.

The ministers appreciated the strides made by Energy Efficient Services Limited (EESL) by investing in seven energy saving projects in the UK that have been in successful operation for more than two years yielding dividends. They welcomed the opening of operations in the UK by India's EESL.

The two ministers recognised the need for an accelerated rate of investment to meet PM Modi's ambitious energy plans. Secretary of State Clark welcomed the various support mechanisms introduced by Government of India to promote adoption of renewable energy resources including generation-based incentives (GBIs), capital and interest subsidies, viability gap funding (VGF), concessional finance and fiscal incentives. The two ministers welcomed the new instruments for raising finance such as green masala bonds on the London Stock Exchange as well as significant commercial investments in oil and gas and growing investment in renewables by UK companies.

Secretary of State Clark and Minister Goyal welcomed the decision by CDC to establish an independent renewable energy company in India. Secretary of State Clark announced that CDC will invest up to \$100m to support projects in the renewable energy sector. This follows the Economic and Financial Dialogue between UK and Indian finance ministers earlier in the week where green finance was an important focus.

This is in addition to significant UK climate funding through multilateral initiatives, such as the Clean Technology Fund for India that has approved an investment plan of US\$775 million for India, in which UK is the largest investor.

The two ministers reaffirmed their governments' commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement to tackle global climate change and welcomed the early entry into force of the Agreement in 2016. They noted that the Paris Agreement calls for low carbon growth and India and the UK will work together to make the most of the opportunities this brings.

The ministers also emphasised the vital importance of research and innovation on energy and reaffirmed their government's commitment to continued excellence with impact in this area. India and the UK are building on years of partnership including through the Newton-Bhabha programme. They welcomed wide-ranging jointly funded Research Council UK projects, spanning solar

energy, bio-energy, a Joint Virtual Centre on Clean Energy with India's Department of Science and Technology. They also noted the long running collaboration in civil nuclear with India's Department of Atomic Energy including a fourth phase of research projects planned to be taken forward in 2017 and the MoU for cooperation with India's Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP).