

[News story: Priti Patel calls on international community to improve global response to humanitarian crises](#)

The International Development Secretary has set out a five point plan to deliver a more effective global response to the unprecedented number of crises the world currently faces.

Before last month, there had been only one certified famine globally since 2000. Parts of South Sudan are now in famine and in 2017 there is a credible risk of another three famines in Yemen, North East Nigeria and Somalia.

Drought and conflict in these countries are pushing families to the brink of starvation and there is also no end in sight to the six-year conflict which has ripped Syria apart.

Ms Patel is leading the charge to improve the global aid system, challenging international organisations and donor countries to be more efficient and effective in how they respond to crises, both in terms of meeting immediate needs, but also preparing for the longer term.

□Ms Patel has also issued a call to action to the international community to step up its support for the humanitarian crises in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and North East Nigeria before it is too late.□ [The UK recently announced new packages of lifesaving support.](#)

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The world faces an unprecedented humanitarian challenge and the warnings are growing louder each day. More than 20 million men, women and children face the very real risk of dying from starvation in the next six months because of relentless war and drought.

British people can be proud that their support is saving lives by providing food, water, healthcare, protection and shelter.

The world looks to Britain in times of crises to lead the response and while we have stepped up our support, we alone cannot avert these crises. Other countries and international bodies must act now to stop innocent people dying of hunger.

The International Development Secretary's five point plan to deliver a more effective global response to the unprecedented number of humanitarian crises includes:

1. Pressing the UN, World Bank and wider humanitarian system to work smarter and harder to ensure that every dollar goes to those who need it most and ensuring the international community lives up to commitments they made at the World Humanitarian Summit last year.

Priti Patel has written to the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres (21 February) and the World Bank President Jim Kim (1 March). She continually stresses that these big international organisations need to better respond to crises by managing the risk of disasters and boosting resilience of countries vulnerable to crises, ensuring the poorest people are better prepared to meet their own urgent needs. The humanitarian system needs to develop better longer-term responses to ongoing crises by investing in job creation, livelihoods, healthcare and education, and trading opportunities. This will enable people affected or displaced by crises for long periods of time to better look after themselves.

She is also calling for greater transparency on where funding is being spent, improving collaboration between humanitarian and development agencies and increasing humanitarian multi-year planning and funding so that partners can better meet both the immediate and longer-term needs of those affected by crises.

The UK's ongoing discussions with the World Bank has led to the Bank prioritising its entire support in Yemen on meeting people's basic needs such as distributing essential medical supplies and providing short-term employment to the most vulnerable. The Bank is also developing plans for new support in other affected countries.

The UN Secretary General has since written a letter to all UN member states to act on the famine. While noting the UN's call for funds, the International Development Secretary is clear the UN needs to ensure that every dollar has maximum impact. This will take increased coordination, robustly assessing and prioritising need, the deployment of quality staff and strong and effective leadership.

2. Building coalitions with donor countries to create effective emergency response plans for crises

The International Development Secretary has brought together a group of major donors to work together on driving forward much needed reform in the global aid system – including key development donors such as the US, Germany, France and others to ensure every country is meeting urgent humanitarian need as well as providing longer term economic development and resilience support.

The UK and UN OCHA also co-hosted a technical planning meeting on Somalia on (23 February). This brought together key partner countries, UN agencies and the major NGOs to identify gaps in the international response to the Somalia drought and potential famine, and develop prioritised plans for addressing these.

This includes making sure international agencies are working together and coordinating humanitarian responses effectively and urging other donors to step up and agreeing that immediate support should focus on food, water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition and health to help save lives. Since this meeting, Australia has pledged AUS\$20 million towards helping people in South Sudan and Somalia suffering from critical food shortages caused by conflict and severe drought.

The International Development Secretary will be meeting key NGOs this week (6 March) to urge them to raise awareness of these crises to help encourage more support from international donors.

3. Playing a leading role in international conferences and forums to encourage other donors and governments to pledge more support

The UK is working with others, including through the UN, G7 and G20, to highlight the urgent humanitarian needs, mobilise much needed resources and keep momentum for humanitarian reform created last year by the London Syria Conference, the World Humanitarian Summit and the Leaders' Summit on refugees.

The UK also used the Oslo Conference on Nigeria (24 February) to press for greater international involvement and increased funding for humanitarian efforts – where over \$450 million was pledged for 2017.

The Nigerian government pledged to step up its efforts at the Oslo Conference, pledging \$1bn of support to the North East of the country in 2017. Their leadership and resources will be crucial to the response, and we are urging them to quickly turn that pledge into funding on the ground.

4. Urging governments to uphold International Humanitarian Law, stop wars that are killing people and allow aid to get to those who need it.

International Development Minister for Africa James Wharton met South Sudanese Government Ministers and officials where he emphasised that it is first and foremost the responsibility of the country's leaders to alleviate the pressure on its people, and to work with the UN, as well as NGOs, who are delivering vital, lifesaving aid to the South Sudanese people, and ultimately create lasting peace and stability.

A lack of respect for International Humanitarian Law exacerbates suffering and disrupts the international community's ability to respond.

The UK will do its utmost to respect and promote respect for International Humanitarian Law, and calls on parties to these conflicts to allow for access by humanitarian agencies to all areas of greatest need.

5. Ensure that UK missions and representatives around the world

are echoing the Secretary of State's call to action throughout the humanitarian system to guarantee a truly global response.

At the UN in New York, the UK's Ambassador Matthew Rycroft met both the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O'Brien (21 February) to relay key UK messages. The UN Secretary-General has set up a steering committee calling for immediate action to ensure a coordinated long-term approach, in line with the UK's reform priorities for the UN.

The UK's Presidency of the UN Security Council in March is focused on preventing conflict in Africa which is driving the humanitarian crises in South Sudan and North East Nigeria. This UK Ambassador is currently leading a Security Council visit to NE Nigeria and the neighbouring countries.

[News story: £20 million for D-Day landings memorial](#)

The British servicemen and women who gave their lives in the D-Day landings and in the Normandy Campaign will be commemorated with a new memorial, supported by £20 million, the Prime Minister and Chancellor today announced.

The monument will be built at the site of the fierce fighting during and after D-Day. For the first time, a memorial will carry the names of the estimated 21,000 members of the British Armed Forces and Merchant Navy, plus those from other nations who fought directly alongside them, who lost their lives in the D-Day landings and the Normandy campaign.

As well as commemorating those who died in Normandy, the memorial will also pay tribute to several thousand sailors and airmen who were lost at sea, and those who died from their wounds after being brought back to the UK for treatment.

The memorial will be unveiled in Normandy on 6th June 2019 – the 75th anniversary of D-Day – and many of the remaining veterans, and the families of those who fought, are expected to be present for a parade at the D-Day landing grounds.

The [Normandy Memorial Trust](#), supported by The Royal British Legion, has been the driving force behind the project and will now launch a fundraising appeal to build on the government's contribution.

The £20 million government funding will come from LIBOR fines levied on the banking industry.

The Chancellor is planning to meet many of the Veterans on the eve of their

departure at Southwick Park, outside Portsmouth, in June before they return to the Normandy Beaches to pay their respects to those who did not return home. Southwick Park is home to the historic D-Day Map Room and was the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, from where the operation was planned and coordinated by General Montgomery and General Eisenhower.

The design and location of the memorial will be confirmed in due course by the Trust.

George Batts MBE, Legion d'Honneur, former National Secretary of the Normandy Veterans' Association said:

It has been the dream of Normandy Veterans for many years for there to be a British memorial in Normandy dedicated to all those from the British Armed Forces who lost their lives in the D-Day Landings and in the Normandy Campaign which followed. This generous commitment by Her Majesty's government will finally enable us to realise this ambition in time for the 75th anniversary of D-Day in June 2019.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

We must never forget the courage, sacrifice and selflessness of the British servicemen and women who gave their lives in the D-Day landings. Located close by the beaches where they began the liberation of Europe, the Normandy Memorial will be a fitting tribute to them and a place where people can gather to reflect on their extraordinary achievements. Its unveiling on the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings in 2019 will provide a timely reminder that we should never take our freedom for granted.

Chancellor Philip Hammond said:

This will be a fitting reminder of the ultimate sacrifice made by British men and women on D-Day for the freedoms we enjoy today. We have a duty to ensure their names will be remembered for generations to come. It is only right we support this project as we look forward to the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings in 2019.

[Press release: Northern Ireland](#)

Assembly election

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

This election has demonstrated the clear desire by the overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland for inclusive devolved government. I congratulate all of those who have been elected.

Everyone now has a shared responsibility to engage intensively in the short period of time that is available to us, to ensure that a strong and stable administration is established.

Northern Ireland has made great strides forward over the past two decades. All of us must continue the work of building a stable, peaceful and prosperous Northern Ireland that works for everyone, based on the strong foundations of the Belfast Agreement and its successors.

It is with this positive intent that the UK Government approaches the days ahead. I will be speaking to party leaders during the course of today and remaining in contact with the Irish Government.

News story: Foreign Secretary to visit Russia

The Foreign Secretary has accepted an invitation from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to visit Moscow in the coming weeks.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary have made clear that our policy towards Russia is to 'engage but beware' and the visit is entirely consistent with this approach.

Discussions will focus on the UK-Russia relationship and current international issues including Syria and Ukraine, where we continue to have significant differences. This is not a return to business as usual and the Foreign Secretary will continue to be robust on those issues where we differ.

We have always been clear that the UK will engage with Russia where it is in our national interest to do so.

Details of precise timings will be confirmed in due course. A potential visit has been in the pipeline for some time, with the Prime Minister and President Putin discussing this when they met in China in September 2016.

[News story: Ofqual conference 2017 – presentations from the day](#)

The annual Ofqual conference is for awarding organisations we regulate, these are the presentations from the day.

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