

UK locust sprayers arrive in Pakistan to help tackle crises

World news story

20 micro-sprayers from the UK have now arrived in Pakistan and will help immediately to tackle the devastating desert locust swarms



They are the first 20 of 50 sprayers as part of a UK aid package of £1m to support the Government of Pakistan tackle to outbreak, which has been declared a national emergency.

UK funding will ensure:

- 50 sprayers (20 of which have arrived) to be sent to control locusts and help to ensure food security;
- 1,300 PPE kits help ensure surveillance and control operations can continue safely through the coronavirus pandemic;
- 18,000 vulnerable farmers are helped;

The sprayers are from UK-based company, Micron Sprayers Ltd. It has over 50 years of industry experience, and its products are used in over a hundred countries across the globe.

Underlining the close trading relationship between the UK and Pakistan, Micron Sprayers Ltd is also working on a separate agreement to supply 83 sprayers to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in Pakistan. This agreement is not funded by UK aid.

UK aid has given £1 million to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to tackle swarms of locusts up until 30 September 2020, as part of our help support food security in Pakistan.

Dr Christian Turner CMG, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, spoke at a ceremony to hand over the sprayers to the Pakistan Government today. He said:

Make no mistake, this locust outbreak is a big challenge. That is

why the UK, through aid to FAO, has worked to ensure these UK-manufactured crop sprayers get to Pakistan as soon as possible.

The High Commissioner to Pakistan handed over the UK sprayers at the ceremony in Islamabad to H.E. Syed Fakhr Imam, Federal Secretary, Mr. Omar Hamid Khan from the Ministry of National Food Security and Research; and Mina Dowlatchahi, Country Representative of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, alongside DFID Pakistan Director Annabel Gerry,

Note to the editors:

- The desert locust is considered the most harmful migratory pest in the world. Scientists say just a single square kilometre of swarm can contain up to 80 million adults, with the capacity to consume the same amount of food in one day as 35,000 people.
- The Pakistan Global Humanitarian response Plan (GHRP) estimates that around 1.5 million people are affected by the infestation
- Climate conditions in 2019 and 2020 combined to make 2020 likely to be one of the worst on record for severe desert locust impacts. UK aid will strengthen Government of Pakistan and farmers' ability to manage the situation, by strengthening surveillance and monitoring capabilities which will provide information on the level of threat and inform decision making.
- FAO is implementing this work in close collaboration with the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. The Department of Plant Protection has been leading the surveillance and response with the operational support of the National Disaster Management Authority has been, working with provincial governments.
- The UK is providing support to the UN Food and Agriculture Office (FAO), which has the skills and expertise in locust control, to coordinate the response on the ground. DFID will help strengthen the ability of the Pakistan government and farmers in surveillance and monitoring of the locust, to identify the threat and evaluate the risk. It will also help them make better decisions, combat desert locust infestations, and improve locust management in Pakistan.

For further information:

For updates on the British High Commission, please follow our social media channels:

Contact

British High Commission
Islamabad
tel. 0300 500 5306

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[High street discount retailer donates £35,868 for waste packaging offences](#)

The donation will be used to help environmental studies for the Tame Valley Wetlands Landscape Partnership based at Hams Hall, Coleshill, Warwickshire.

This financial contribution is from an Enforcement Undertaking (EU) offered to the Environment Agency by The Works Stores, a high street (and online) discount retailer of books, art and craft materials, gifts, toys, games, whose head office is based in Coleshill.

The company admitted that between 7 April 2010 and 7 April 2016 it had not been registered as a producer of waste packaging due to lack of awareness of The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations.

These regulations ensure packaging materials such as cardboard, plastics and glass are recycled and do not end up in landfill.

Companies with a turnover of £2 million or more and which handle more than 50 tonnes of packaging per year, must ensure a certain percentage of waste packaging is recycled.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow businesses who fail to comply with legal requirements or pollute the environment to come into compliance or positively address and restore any harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

The Environment Agency is increasingly using this method of enforcement for less serious cases to restore and improve the environment, change behaviour and improve practices of the offender.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

A spokesperson for the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust said:

The money is being used by the Tame Valley Wetlands Landscape Partnership to deliver a wide range of environmental activities.

Primarily it will be used to deliver education sessions to primary school groups about the importance of rivers and wildlife based at the partnership's Environment Centre at Hams Hall.

Some of the funding will also be used to deliver training sessions to groups in environmental conservation and to support the willow tit, one of the UK's rapidly declining native birds.

Funding will help the partnership's volunteers Tameforce to undertake tree planting and other activities to improve the habitat for willow tit.

Notes for editors

Enforcement Undertakings (EUs) enable firms and individuals who have damaged the environment or operated outside of legislative requirements to offer to complete actions which will address the cause and effect of their offending, including making a payment to an appropriate environmental project.

EUs can be offered for offences including polluting rivers, breaching permit conditions designed to protect communities, or failing to register and comply with recycling/recovery obligations. The Environment Agency then carefully considers whether the actions offered by the offender are acceptable.

Where the breach does not have a direct impact on the environment, such as Packaging Waste Regulations offences, EU offers must contain actions that will protect, restore or enhance the environment.

Environmental incidents should be reported to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

UN Human Rights Council 43: Resolution on South Sudan

Thank You Madam President.

The United Kingdom, on behalf of a core group also consisting of Albania and Norway, is again honoured to present this resolution on South Sudan to the Human Rights Council for adoption.

The resolution before us would renew the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for a further year.

At the outset, allow me to warmly acknowledge the Permanent Representative of South Sudan, and his delegation, for their constructive cooperation during the negotiation of this resolution. I also commend their Government's continued commitment to work with the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan.

That this resolution should again be adopted by consensus, and under item 4, is testimony to the desire of the Government of South Sudan to begin to face its challenges, and to reach out openly to this Council and the international community more broadly. We again firmly believe that the work of the Commission can help identify and address critical human rights challenges and provide support to address them.

Madam President,

We welcome the formation of the transitional government as there remain human rights issues which must be addressed. We are, for example, concerned by significant increases in intercommunal violence and systemic sexual and gender-based violence. Moreover, the humanitarian situation remains dire and exacerbated by the COVID 19 global pandemic. The transitional government therefore has a lot to address – and we pledge to assist where we can.

In this regard, I would like to stress the important call in this year's resolution to provide technical assistance to the new government. We look forward to working with the Government of South Sudan, the OHCHR and international donors to help identify and realise this.

Finally, Madam President, I would like to thank all delegations for their valuable engagement during the negotiation of this resolution and I look forward to its adoption, again, by consensus.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Scottish Secretary Alistair Jack marks 2020 Armed Forces Week](#)

News story

This year's annual celebration of the UK's military community is also marking 75 years since the end of the Second World War in Europe.



Scotland Secretary Alister Jack said:

“Beginning today [Monday 22 June], Armed Forces Week sees the whole country unite to celebrate and say thanks to our military community of service personnel, reserves, veterans, cadets and families – for their unwavering commitment in helping keep us safe.

“While this year’s celebrations will, by and large, be virtual due to coronavirus, this does not diminish it’s importance, with 2020 being 75 years since the end of the Second World War in Europe, followed by the end of the War in the Far East.

“As we are all too aware, this year the UK and the rest of the world have been embroiled in a new battle – against coronavirus. The UK’s military have been front and centre in that fight, providing additional specialist skills and expertise in Scotland.

“On behalf of the whole of the country, I would like to offer heartfelt thanks to them all.”

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