

Hostilities have driven record levels of need in Syria: UK Statement at the UN Security Council

I'd like to start by thanking Special Envoy Geir Pedersen, Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya and Ms Nirvana Shawky for their valuable briefings.

The Syrian conflict continues to have a profound impact on the Syrian population.

Hostilities have driven record levels of need, with 14.6 million Syrians, 80% of the population, requiring humanitarian assistance.

The monthly cost of food has reached an all-time high, exacerbated by the impact of Russia's premeditated and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

The Council needs to support the UN in its efforts to assist millions of Syrians.

The Secretary-General has highlighted the continued life-saving importance of the UN's cross-border mandate, due for renewal in July.

In the past few years, when this Council has, regrettably, closed border crossings, needs have increased.

Without the mandate, another generation of women and girls, as outlined powerfully by Nirvana Shawky today, will face increased suffering.

Access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services would be severely hit and survivors of gender-based violence will not get the support they need.

The UK therefore supports both the renewal and expansion of the UN's cross-border mandate.

For our part, we have worked to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 2585.

UK support for early recovery over the past six months has provided agricultural training and inputs for livestock and vegetable production, and provided apprenticeships and small business grants to help create jobs and address market gaps.

We urge all Council Members to support the UN's cross-border mandate in July.

Indeed, as the Secretary-General clearly states, the Council has a 'moral and humanitarian imperative' to do so.

But we should also be clear that cross-border assistance alone is not enough.

The UK continues to support the UN-facilitated, Syrian-led process outlined within UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

UN Special Envoy Pedersen has the UK's full support in for his continued efforts to facilitate a sustainable resolution to the conflict.

[PM call with President of Chile: 26 April 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to the Chilean President Gabriel Boric today.



The Prime Minister spoke to the Chilean President Gabriel Boric today.

The Prime Minister congratulated President Boric on his election last month, and the leaders agreed to cooperate further on shared priorities including our strong trade relations, action on climate change and long-standing defence relationship.

The leaders shared their deep concerns at the devastation and human rights violations inflicted on Ukraine by Russia. The Prime Minister reiterated that the difference between right and wrong had rarely been so clear.

The Prime Minister welcomed Chile's support on the UK's accession to the CPTPP trading partnership and committed to boost UK-Chile bilateral trade and investment.

They also discussed the importance of maintaining momentum on COP26 commitments, and President Boric updated on the country's efforts to transition to renewable energy.

Veto initiative adopted by the UN General Assembly

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

The founding members of the United Nations vowed to save generations that followed them from the scourge of war.

They conferred the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on the Security Council.

The UN Charter, in giving that solemn duty, gives the permanent members the power of veto. This is a heavy responsibility, to be used in the interests of securing the peace and security that people around the world seek, and the UN was established to provide.

It is not to be used lightly. And should not, we believe, be used without accountability. It should not prevent the Council from fulfilling its mandate – which is why we have supported this resolution today.

Russia used its veto 17 times since 2011 to block the Council's efforts to protect the Syrian people. Russia used its veto to prevent the Council from taking action in response to their illegal and unprovoked war in Ukraine. Russia has done this in isolation from other Council members, reflecting the lack of international support.

Therefore, the United Kingdom welcomes the call for Member States, who hold a permanent seat on the Security Council, to explain their use of veto to the General Assembly.

For our part, the United Kingdom has not exercised our veto since 1989. We listen carefully and negotiate on the Security Council to try and find agreement.

We prefer to win votes rather than use our veto to block Council action. The UK is a signatory to the Accountability, Coherency and Transparency Group Code of Conduct, where we have pledged not to vote against any credible draft resolution intended to prevent or halt mass atrocities.

By adopting this resolution today we take a step in pursuit of upholding international peace and security, which is what the UN is here to do.

And I thank you Mr President.

UN High-Level Round Table on the Horn of Africa drought – Minister for Africa speech

Thank you, Chairs. We are very grateful to you for leading this Round Table, and to UN OCHA for convening it.

Honourable Prime Minister Roble, ministers for Ethiopia and Kenya, colleagues, ladies, and gentlemen,

The Horn of Africa is in the grip of a worsening drought. Tens of millions of people are in jeopardy, facing an uncertain future. Lives and livelihoods across Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia have been disrupted – and many will not recover.

To save lives, to stop communities from collapsing, we must act is now.

Today I want to focus on Somalia, given the particular urgency of the situation there.

When famine last occurred, in 2011, over a quarter of a million people needlessly lost their lives. I remember so clearly that the world pledged 'never again', and we stood behind that commitment in 2016 / 17. Then, we acted quickly. We scaled up our resources and headed off the large scale loss of life.

But today, famine is stalking Somalia once again: without immediate help, 81,000 people are at risk of dying [clarification: are already in its grip]; and, without immediate help, 350,000 children are at risk of dying.

The rest of the county is teetering on the edge. Nearly half the population needs humanitarian assistance. Water is scarce, cattle are dying, prices are skyrocketing, disease is spreading, and hundreds of thousands are on the move in search of food and water. Villages and schools, as we've heard, already stand empty.

Yesterday I took a virtual tour of Baidoa, to see things for myself. I wanted to talk to people about what's happening and to see some of the brilliant work being done by our partner, the Norwegian Refugee Council.

What I learned was deeply harrowing. I heard the voices of the mothers who can do nothing more to save their children. Without more of our help, their future is truly bleak.

So can I applaud the leadership of the UN and EU for convening this meeting; and the UN for taking the bold and correct decision to move from drought

response to famine prevention in Somalia.

Today there must also be leadership from the international community. Even as we grapple with the tragic events in Ukraine, and the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, we need to dig deeper, in response to the crisis unfolding across the Horn of Africa.

If the current rainy season is poor – it'll be the fourth in a row – what is already happening in Somalia could be multiplied many times and repeated elsewhere. A regional crisis of this magnitude needs a coordinated and ambitious regional response. We are already seeing cross-border movements as communities search for pasture, search for water, and search for humanitarian services.

The UK will continue to play its part.

I visited to East Africa in January, and the trajectory of the crisis and the severity of suffering was already clear to me then. That's why we responded swiftly, providing £24m in emergency assistance for early actions across Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya (as well as funds for South Sudan for flooding).

With Somalia again gripped by famine, I am announcing today that we will provide a further £25m for life-saving food, water, and emergency health support to those most in need. I am also very pleased to announce a new partnership with Qatar, which will see them invest \$1.5m with us towards resilience and the emergency response.

I know that, in this room today, we have the knowledge, and the tools, to stop widespread famine in Somalia, and to tackle drought in the Horn, and to help communities build their resilience for the future.

We did it before when early action and our collective generosity averted famine in 2016 / 17. We can do it again.

By working together, our knowledge and tools can stem those tears in Baidoa, and make good on our promise to the region: never again.

[Foreign Secretary opens debate on the situation Ukraine](#)

Introduction: state of the war

I beg to move... that this House has considered the situation in Ukraine.

Putin's unprovoked, illegal war has now entered its third month.

Russian forces failed in their initial war aims.

They failed to take Kyiv and they have suffered heavy losses.

But Ukraine now faces a renewed offensive in the East and the South. And we are seeing atrocities in Mariupol, Odesa, and beyond.

We must double down in our response.

So far Putin's planning has been riddled with misconceptions and miscalculations.

He was wrong about Ukraine's strength and determination.

We must prove him wrong again in his expectations of our stamina and our commitment.

Our aim remains clear: Putin must lose in Ukraine. And we will do everything we can to ensure that.

We know his ambitions don't stop at Ukraine.

I am in constant contact with Allies and partners, urging more action.

That was the case I made to NATO and G7 Foreign Ministers earlier this month... and in every exchange I have with my counterparts around the world.

Since those meetings we've seen action in 3 areas...

Lethal aid

First of all, we are stepping up lethal aid.

The UK has always led this effort.

We have already supplied 6,000 anti-tank weapons and 120 armoured fighting vehicles, as well as ammunition, and other weapons.

We are helping other countries deliver equipment by providing logistics support.

We are also backfilling third countries' stocks, for example offering to deploy British Challenger 2 tanks to Poland.

And we are training Ukrainian troops to use the new equipment.

Our allies are stepping up too.

For too long there was a false distinction between defensive and offensive weapons.

It became an excuse for some to drag their feet.

That time has now passed.

NATO allies are clear that we are delivering heavy weapons.

That is what Ukraine needs to halt the latest Russian initiative and to regain control over their territory.

Sanctions

Second, we are also relentlessly ramping up our economic action to choke off the funding for Putin's war effort.

Again the UK is leading the way.

We have sanctioned more individuals and more organisations than any other nation.

So far we have designated over 1,500 individuals and entities.

Including over 100 oligarchs with assets worth over £198 billion.

We have put asset freezes on 18 major Russian banks – and like to see other countries follow – and barred over 3 million Russian companies from raising money on our capital markets.

These actions have been closely coordinated with the G7 and others.

We have also taken decisive action on trade – cutting Russia off from WTO terms and banning high tech exports to halt their technological development.

We have announced a ban on all new outward investment into Russia.

We cannot stop here.

We will keep increasing the pressure.

We need a new wave of sanctions.

Diplomatic action

Third, we are resolute in our diplomatic response.

We are reopening our Embassy in Kyiv.

I want to thank Ambassador Melinda Simmons and her team for their courage and action.

We are further isolating Putin on the world stage.

The United Kingdom led the diplomatic push to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council.

We are using our Presidency of the UN Security Council to expose Russia's war crimes, appalling rape and sexual violence seen systematically used in Ukraine.

We gave President Zelenskyy a platform to detail the abhorrent crimes that have been committed by Putin's forces.

And we have launched the Murad code to set the global standard for evidence gathering from sexual violence.

We're also working with the 141 countries that voted to condemn Russia in the UN General Assembly to toughen our stance.

Russia is not serious about negotiations.

Any eventual settlement would need to secure both Ukrainian and European security.

Must be backed up by international enforcement – both economic and security.

The fact is that Russia simply can't be trusted to follow through on what it signs up to.

There has to be full enforcement of any settlement that is eventually reached.

Keeping Ukraine afloat

While the war continues we also need to support the Ukrainian people.

We're helping refugees, delivering food, medicine and other essentials, and helping to keep their economy afloat.

Our overall package of humanitarian, economic and military support is worth \$2 billion.

I can confirm today that two convoys of more than 40 fire engines have now arrived in Ukraine, packed with rescue equipment.

And we are supplying 22 more ambulances to Ukraine – equipped with paramedic kits and medical grab bags.

We secured the World Bank's largest ever financial commitment to low income countries to help them deal with rising food security and energy prices.

Throughout this crisis the generosity of the British people has been incredible.

They donated over £300 million to the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal, including the UK's largest ever government aid-match of £25 million.

I have seen Ukrainian flags flying all over the country.

The British people are standing with Ukraine.

Looking to the future

When the war is finally over, we will continue to support a strong, sovereign Ukraine.

We will help to bolster their security against future threats.

To that end, we are working on a joint commission with Poland to ensure Ukraine has the means to defend itself in the longer term, including with NATO-standard weapons.

And we will all help Ukraine to rebuild.

I am determined to work with the US, EU and other partners on a new Marshall Plan for the country.

We need to see a landmark international effort to rebuild Ukraine's towns and cities, regenerate their industries and secure their freedom.

We will also ensure that Putin and his regime are held to account for their crimes in Ukraine.

We led calls at the OSCE for an independent investigation.

It has reported "credible evidence" of torture, rape, the killing of civilians and the forced deportation of over half a million people.

We have referred Russia to the ICC. It is now backed by over 40 states.

We are providing additional funding to the Court, as well as UK personnel to provide technical assistance.

And we have appointed Sir Howard Morrison to support the Ukrainian Prosecutor General in her investigations.

This House can be assured that whatever it takes to bring the perpetrators to justice will be done.

Conclusion

The repulsive behaviour of Putin and his forces only strengthens our resolve to stand with Ukraine.

This is a battle for Ukraine's freedom and sovereignty – and for the very principles of self-determination and the rule of law.

Ukraine must triumph.

We will not relent in our efforts until they do.