

Why donating cash rather than goods is better for Ukraine

I have received the enclosed letter from Ministers at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport:

Dear Colleagues,

Why donating cash rather than goods is better for Ukraine

Firstly, thank you to colleagues who have been in touch over the last few weeks on this matter. It is clear that you and your constituents are making great efforts to support those who have been forced to flee their homes because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As President Zelenskyy said when he spoke directly to us last week, “we are looking for help from civilised countries, and we are thankful for this help”.

As such, we wanted to give you an update on the best ways to do this. How Government is supporting Ukraine’s immediate humanitarian needs

As the Foreign Secretary wrote in her letter of Monday 7 March, the UK has now committed £394m in aid, including £220m in humanitarian assistance which will be used to save lives; and protect vulnerable people inside Ukraine and in the wider region.

The government’s focus is on supporting the UN and other humanitarian partners to respond effectively to the deteriorating humanitarian situation; as well as strengthen the effectiveness of the overall international humanitarian response.

Advice for the public and organisations

We welcome the public’s eagerness and generosity to support the people of Ukraine at this time of crisis. It is fantastic that the Disasters Emergency Committee’s appeal for Ukraine has now reached more than £130m, including £25m in government funding, our largest ever aid-match donation.

Details of the appeal and how to donate can be found on www.DEC.org.uk.

We do however request that organisations and people who would like to help do so by donating cash through trusted charities and aid organisations, rather than by donating goods. The Polish Embassy in London also reiterated this request in their [statement](#) of 01 March.

Cash can easily and safely be transferred quickly to areas where it’s needed. Individuals and aid organisations can then use it to buy what’s most appropriate at that moment. If your constituents or organisations have excess donated goods they could consider donating these to a charity shop who may, depending on the nature of these items, be able to sell these to raise cash

which may support the Ukraine crisis. Alternatively, local fund-raising efforts using donated goods can also raise cash.

Unsolicited donations of goods, although well-meant, can obstruct supply chains and delay more urgent life-saving assistance from getting through given the huge logistical and coordination challenges associated with handling and onward distribution. Goods provided may not be what is most needed and run the risk of not reaching affected populations, including looting and theft or being sold further on informal markets thereby distorting the local economy. Distribution is difficult to control and manage well, particularly in conflict affected contexts – the most vulnerable like women, the elderly, disabled and children often do not receive goods.

If members of the public or organisations would still like to take forward a donation of goods we encourage them to reach out to a charity or organising body based in country to establish what is needed and how to deliver it safely before they begin to collect goods. Some useful links can be found in the attached Annex.

Once this has been done, to help facilitate transportation the Government has removed the requirement to complete unfamiliar customs paperwork. [Guidance](#) is here and an Export Support Service helpline available on 0300 303 8955. Charities can also contact their online [support team](#).

We will continue to update you and keep you abreast of developments as the situation continues to evolve.

With thanks to you and your constituents for their generous offers of help. We have also included a link to more information on what your constituents and local charities [can do to help](#) the people of Ukraine.

Best wishes

[Taxes for a purpose](#)

Let me have another go at explaining to the Treasury why hypothecated taxes are a bad idea and have not been adopted before now. The idea that an NI rise of around £12bn will pay to get the NHS waiting lists down and to fix social care is deeply misleading.

The first problem with it is how does the government transfer the money from the NHS to social care? Will the NHS be willing to say goodbye to the £12bn soon? When will the waiting lists even begin to come down, let alone come down to sensible levels? I suspect the NHS will want to keep the money

The second problem is we spend £40bn of public money a year on social care. The extra £12bn will not pay for social care. It will merely pay for some

improvements. It is wrong to give people the idea that social care is cheap, when it is dear and will get dearer.

If we truly want hypothecated revenues to pay for the NHS then we need to tell people all current Income Tax, Inheritance Tax, Stamp Duty, property transaction duty and Capital Gains Tax is needed to pay for the current NHS budget. Then they might understand the sums involved. It would take all current Council Tax to pay the present £40 bn of social care.

The government would be well advised to change all its presentations of sums of money and public service delivery. It is not the case that a £10bn service is good and a £15 bn service naturally better. When I go to the shops I do not come home and say I have spent £80, only to be told by family I should have spent £100. Instead I report what I bought and might report the sums involved if I thought it was good value. My family might want me to buy more things or get better bargains but would not urge me to simply spend more money. Government should talk about what it buys and how it ensures value for money rather than bragging about large sums spent.

[Please give cash not goods for Ukraine](#)

Government request

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Best wishes,

Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society

Minister of State for Europe and North America

Minister of State for South and Central Asia, North Africa,

UN & The Commonwealth Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict

- In Poland the authorities have issued a statement calling on the UK public not to provide further in-kind donations, as previously mentioned above. Specific offers can still be channelled through their official website (<https://pomagamukrainie.gov.pl/>) and a Polish NGO forum coordinated by PHA (Polish Humanitarian Action) includes a number of national and international NGOs and the Polish Red Cross. You can register to be part of that forum [here](#) or contact the Polish Red Cross (PCK) office@pck.pl.
- In Romania the government has set up a platform to coordinate donations and to link them with needs on the other side of the border (<https://www.gov.ro/ro/ucraina-impuneuna-ajutam-mai-mult>). Note this website is currently only available in Romanian.
- FCDO is in touch with the Governments of Hungary, Slovakia and Moldova as to whether they have plans to set up similar coordinating bodies. We are similarly not aware of any body endorsed by the Government of Ukraine able to coordinate the delivery of already donated goods directly into Ukraine.
- Where private sector organisations wish to explore in kind donations, we encourage them to explore opportunities through any existing partnerships with the UN, the Red Cross or NGOs that they already have in place; or reach out to established registered charities on The Charity Commission and Fundraising regulator website at [UK](#).

- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also encourage companies to refrain from sending unsolicited donations that may not correspond to identified needs or meet international quality standards. Financial/cash donations are more effective than in-kind donations. However, for businesses wishing to contribute in-kind goods or services, please reach out to OCHA with as much detail as possible, including what items they may wish to donate and how much, the time frame for delivery, details on shipping and any other conditions. They can then guide business to most appropriate recipient organization(s). Companies with employees, suppliers, or customers in the country or region, or those with existing agreements with responding humanitarian organizations should aim to provide support directly to these groups. For more information, please contact ocha-ers-ps@un.org.
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[What plans does the Secretary of State have to secure value for money from the additional funds allocated to the NHS for 2022-23?](#)

The Department of Health and Social Care has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (119393):

Question:

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to secure value for money from the additional funds allocated to the NHS for 2022-23. (119393)

Tabled on: 07 February 2022

Answer:

Edward Argar, Minister of State:

The new Health and Social Care Levy provides £23.3 billion for the National Health Service over the Spending Review period. We will ensure that this investment is provided for frontline care in England, increasing efficiencies and using reforms to improve productivity. This will include prioritising diagnosis and treatment, transforming the delivery of elective care and providing better information and support to patients.

The answer was submitted on 15 Mar 2022 at 09:50.

I asked this question for a variety of reasons. I think it will prove

difficult to switch the money from this tax from the NHS to social care over the course of the next three years as planned. I am concerned that it will lead some people to think £12bn extra on the huge NHS budget or £12 bn in total for social care will handle the needs of each service, when the current totals on public health and government financed social care in the UK is already at £230bn. I am concerned about how the money will be spent, wanting to see more detailed plans of how the money is spent on the extra nurses, doctors, medicines and procedures that are needed to clear the backlists.

There are savings to be banked from the end of the pandemic. The large costs in setting up and rolling out new vaccines and the test and trace system will be behind us, and the high costs of the early intensive care of covid patients will be much reduced now the vaccines cut the numbers and reduce the severity of the disease for most patients. I am also trying to find out how costs will change following the current reorganisation of management structures where presumably efficiency was part of the original plan behind yet another reorganisation.

My contribution in the Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Bill debate

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Opposition parties are struggling a bit with this idea of democracy, are they not? Taking back control was to have control by the people and for the people, and offering the people an early general election so that they could choose an effective Government when a Parliament was logjammed, hopeless and not prepared to govern with clarity and passion was the right thing to do. I just cannot understand why Labour and the SNP are still queuing up to defend the indefensible, and to say that because they may well be faced again with a situation in which they do not dare face the electors, they need some kind of legal rigmarole and manipulation of votes in a balanced or damaged Parliament to thwart the popular will yet again. "Never let the people make the decision," they say: it must be contained within Parliament, even when a Parliament has obviously failed, as it did when it could not implement the wishes of the British people over the great Brexit referendum.

I want assurances from the Minister that this new policy will protect the Crown—the Queen—from the difficult business of politics. I think the Minister's version of it is better than the version from the other place. Of course, it must keep the courts out. There is nothing more political than the decision about when we go to an election and when we give the people their power back and the right to make that fundamental choice. It is a choice that now can mean something, because we do not have to keep on accepting a whole load of European laws that we have no great role in making. Again, we need that absolute guarantee that we will have this freedom so that that can

happen.

Those who say that they do not want the Prime Minister to have this much power have surely been in the House long enough to know that, while the Prime Minister has considerable power from his or her office, they are also buffeted and challenged every day by a whole series of pressures in this place and outside. If a leader of a party with a majority wanted an early election that their supporters did not want, I suspect that that would get sorted out without an early election. So we are only talking about what happens when a Government have lost their majority and the Prime Minister is doing his or her best to govern as a minority. We get the extraordinary position we got when the whole Opposition wanted to gang up to thwart the public making a choice, but did not want to govern. That was totally unacceptable, and the Opposition should hear the message from the doorsteps in the 2019 election. The public wanted a Parliament with a Government who could govern, so they decided to choose one. Those who sought to block it made themselves more unpopular, and they showed that they do not understand the fundamental point of democracy that, when Parliament lets the people down, the people must be able to choose a new and more effective Parliament.