

# UK announces new support for people facing famine in Horn of Africa

Press release

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Speaking at an event on the humanitarian crisis unfolding in the Horn of Africa at the [UN General Assembly](#) in New York, Ford announced £22.8 million to enable the UN and our NGO partners to continue lifesaving assistance through cash support; access to water and sanitation services; and the delivery of highly specialised health and nutrition treatment.

Ford called on the international community to act now to avert disaster, as concerns rise that a projected famine in Somalia could be worse than in 2011, when a quarter of a million people lost their lives.

Minister Ford said:

The drought in the Horn of Africa is one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. Almost half of Somalia's population is in dire need of help – with 300,000 people forecast to be in famine by October if assistance is not provided immediately.

The UK is playing a leading role in the international response to this crisis. We are providing vital life-saving food security, health, nutrition and water support to half a million people across Somalia, backed up by the funding announced today.

If we are to avoid a repeat of the catastrophic drought which saw a quarter of million people die in Somalia a decade ago, the international community must act now.

This package of support takes the UK's total humanitarian, health and nutrition funding for Somalia this financial year up to £52.8 million.

The UK has allocated a total of £156 million in humanitarian support for crises in East Africa this financial year.

Earlier this year in April, the [UK announced a £25 million package](#) for humanitarian, health and nutrition programming in Somalia as well as a [further £5 million of humanitarian aid](#) as part of a package for World Humanitarian Day (Friday 19 August).

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## [Two drug suppliers will spend longer in prison](#)

Two prolific drug suppliers will spend longer in prison after their sentences were referred to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme by the then Solicitor General Edward Timpson CBE KC MP.

Keith Davis, 56, from Buckinghamshire, and Andrew Gurney, 51, from Birmingham, were both involved in a professional conspiracy to produce tons of amphetamine sulphate, a class B drug. Davis was also involved in further conspiracies to produce other drugs.

Both offenders were involved in the construction and operation of a laboratory that was capable of producing 136kg of amphetamine sulphate per week, meaning that around 6 tons of the drug with a wholesale value of £11m could have been produced during the laboratory's period of operation between June 2020 and April 2021.

On 10 June 2022, at Kingston upon Thames Crown Court, Davis was sentenced to 5 years and 3 months' imprisonment for conspiracy to supply and produce a class B drug and conspiracy to transfer criminal property. Gurney was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months' imprisonment for conspiracy to produce a class B drug and possession of criminal property.

Following the sentencing, the then Solicitor General referred the sentences of both offenders to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme as he felt that they were too low.

On 21 September 2022, the Court found the sentences of both Davis and Gurney to be unduly lenient. Davis received a new sentence of 10 years' imprisonment, while Gurney will now also serve a sentence of 10 years' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, the newly appointed HM Solicitor General Michael Tomlinson MP said:

The illegal and dangerous drugs produced and supplied by both Davis and Gurney will have ruined lives, and so I am satisfied with the decision of the Court to order both offenders to serve longer prison terms.

The new sentences are a better reflection of the seriousness of the crime of drug dealing and supplying at this level.

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## [Fusion leaders elected to Royal Academy of Engineering Fellowship](#)

The Royal Academy of Engineering has elected two more UK Atomic Energy Authority leaders to its prestigious Fellowship having made exceptional contributions to fusion energy.

Professor Ian Chapman, Chief Executive, and Chris Waldon, Chief Engineer and Deputy Director for STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production), join leading figures in the field of engineering and technology.

Both were admitted to the Academy, which comprises around 1,700 distinguished engineers including UKAEA's Dr Rob Buckingham, Director of RACE, at its AGM in London last night. In joining the Fellowship, they will add their capabilities to the Academy's mission to create a sustainable society and an inclusive economy for all.

Ian Chapman said: "Delivering fusion energy is a huge challenge which requires the very best scientists and engineers in many disciplines working together – I am hugely fortunate to be able to represent a diverse and brilliant team and this honour from the Royal Academy of Engineering is really recognition for all of them."

The Royal Academy of Engineering brings together the knowledge and experience of some of the best and brightest engineers, inventors and technologists in the UK and from around the world.

Chris Waldon added: "I am really humbled by this peer recognition. I have been fortunate to work with truly exceptional people and teams delivering exciting programmes that can make a difference. As we strive to deliver fusion energy to a world that needs it, joining the Royal Academy community represents a wonderful opportunity to widen the network of those involved so

we can deliver ever better and faster.”

Fellowship of the Academy is considered one of the highest national honours an engineer may receive, with every person admitted subscribing to an obligation to promote its charitable aim.

This centres around the “pursuit, encouragement and maintenance of excellence” in the whole field of engineering to promote the advancement of the science, art and practice of engineering for the benefit of the public.

Fusion energy has great potential to deliver safe, sustainable, low carbon energy for generations to come. STEP is aiming to deliver a prototype UK fusion energy powerplant producing net electricity in the 2040s. It is of strategic importance to UKAEA, as well the national and global effort to harness fusion technology in the fight against climate change.

For more information visit [step.ukaea.uk](http://step.ukaea.uk)

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## **Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine: UK statement – OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation**

Thank you Mr Chair. Over the past weeks, we have seen that the strong will, courage and remarkable military skill of the Armed Forces of Ukraine has not only minimised Russian gains, but also enabled substantive advances through counter attacks in eastern and southern areas of Ukraine.

As Ukraine continues offensive operations in the north-east of the country, Russian forces have sought to establish a defensive line between the Oskil River and the town of Svatove. This zone is important to Russia, it contains one of the few main resupply routes Russia still controls from the Belgorod region of Russia into Ukraine. Additionally, this line sits along the border of Luhansk Oblast which Russia declared its intent to seize as one of its immediate war aims.

As Russia digs in and attempts to defend this zone, Ukrainian Forces have now begun to conduct offensive operations east of the Oskil River and reports indicate that they are now in control of Bilohorivka, a village located in the Luhansk oblast. It is increasingly unclear whether Russia’s front-line forces have sufficient reserves or adequate morale to withstand another concerted Ukrainian assault.

Mr Chair, recent reporting indicates that, despite their purported overall size, sufficient Russian manpower for its invasion of Ukraine remains a key challenge for the Russian military and presents a stark mismatch between

ambition and reality. Last July, in this Forum, we discussed the attempts by the Kremlin-linked Russian private military company, Wagner Group, to recruit Russian convicts for service in Ukraine. This has been reinvigorated. A video recently posted online appears to show Wagner owner Yevgeny Prigozhin making a recruitment pitch to prisoners. In the video, Prigozhin emphasises that he is only seeking “fighters for assault units”. In return, prisoners have been offered commutation of their sentences as well as cash incentives.

Additionally, numerous reports indicate that the Russian military is deploying mobile recruitment offices throughout Russia to attract “contract soldiers” to fight in Ukraine, selling the proposition as “the choice of a real man”. A significant monetary incentive is also being offered to these potential “contract soldiers”.

It is a telling indication that the Russian leadership has resorted to bribing its citizens and convicts to join the so-called “Special Military Operation” in an attempt to bolster its force levels.

Separately, Russian military academies are now shortening training courses and bringing cadets’ graduation dates forward. Almost certainly to enable the early release of cadets so that they can be deployed more quickly in support of the Ukraine operation.

Mr Chair, in sum, the impact of Russia’s manpower challenge has become increasingly severe. The acceleration of officer cadets’ training, the recruitment of “contract soldiers” and Wagner’s demand for assault troops suggests that two of the most critical shortages within the Russian military manning crisis are combat infantry and junior commanders.

Further to this, President Putin’s decision to impose a partial mobilisation shows he is willing to break his own promises and also sacrifice citizens of Russia for his so-called “Special Military Operation”. This mobilisation is a clear admission that President Putin’s mission is failing. He and his Defence Minister have sent thousands of their own citizens to their deaths, poorly trained, poorly equipped and poorly led. No amount of threats and propaganda can hide the fact that Ukraine is winning this war, the international community are united and Russia is becoming a global pariah.

Meanwhile, at the FSC, our Russian colleagues would rather we did not focus on Russia’s struggles to resource its illegal war of choice. Last week we saw efforts to distract from these setbacks and shift blame onto others by doubling down on tired old narratives, seeking to justify the unjustifiable, to this Forum and the Russian population.

These maladroit attempts to obfuscate the truth fool no one. The clear and unambiguous fact is that it is the Russian leadership who decided to conduct its unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine. Russia was warned that such a reckless act would be a strategic mistake, a strategic mistake that would have strategic consequences. The blame for the impact of these consequences lies solely with the Russian leadership and military – no one else.

Russia’s aggressive actions have brought into sharp focus for many countries

what was once unthinkable – Russia’s willingness to invade a sovereign neighbour. In response, the UK, along with others who seek a secure and stable future in the Euro-Atlantic area, is strengthening its defensive capabilities, including through the NATO Defensive Alliance, to protect against Russia’s chosen path of naked aggression.

Mr Chair, the Kremlin’s conspiracy theories and self-serving propaganda that seek to portray Russia – the aggressor who has unleashed horrendous violence on Ukraine – as the victim, is nothing more than the textbook delusion of an oppressor who has severely miscalculated.

As our Ukrainian friends have so aptly demonstrated: “Courage is fire, bullying is smoke.”

Finally Mr Chair, I would note that just yesterday, it was reported that Russia is pressing ahead with plans to carry out a referendum in temporarily controlled areas. Any Russian attempt to hold sham referenda on the sovereign territory of Ukraine would have no legitimacy and will be met with a coordinated response from Ukraine’s partners.

Mr Chair, the UK stands in solidarity with Ukraine, including through the ongoing provision of military assistance, as Ukrainians defend their homeland and fight for the simple right to a free, peaceful and prosperous future.  
Thank you

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## **Death of Mahsa Amini in Iran: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon’s statement**

Press release

Foreign Office Minister Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon has issued a statement following the death of Mahsa Amini in Iran.



Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

The death of Mahsa Amini in Iran following her arrest for alleged dress code violations is shocking. We are extremely concerned at reports of serious mistreatment of Ms Amini, and many others, by the security forces.

We urge the Iranian government to investigate the circumstances of her death with rigour and transparency, and to hold to account anyone responsible.

We call on Iran to respect the right to peaceful assembly, to exercise restraint and to release unfairly detained protesters. The use of violence in response to the expression of fundamental rights, by women or any other members of Iranian society, is wholly unjustifiable.

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