

Finding solutions to global displacement

Thank you, Mr. President and thank you also High Commissioner Grandi. I'm sorry I missed your remarks, but I was carrying out my democratic duty to elect new members of this Council. Thank you also for the tremendous efforts that you and UNHCR are making across the globe to help those most in need, particularly in light of the huge impacts of COVID-19.

The United Kingdom is a strong and steadfast supporter of UNHCR and last year we contributed \$122 million dollars in core and country level funding. And I want to echo the concerns expressed today about COVID-19's impact on refugees and internally displaced persons. We've provided \$184 million dollars for the new UN appeals, including \$25 million dollars for UNHCR as part of an overall \$1 billion dollars for the COVID response since the crisis began. And that money for UNHCR and for the UN appeals will help install handwashing stations and isolation and treatment centers in refugee camps, provide protection and education services to forcibly displaced children, and increase access to clean water for displaced people in areas of armed conflict. As the High Commissioner set out, efforts to build and sustain peace are the key to resolving displacement. The COVID-19 crisis is therefore an opportunity, colleagues, for us to redouble our conflict prevention and our peace-building efforts in support of the Secretary-General's vision of Building Back Better. And we agree that a continued focus on solutions remains critical. We have consistently emphasised the importance of longer-term developmental measures, which increase refugee self-reliance as well as the importance of access to key services and opportunities, including education, work and training, delivered in a way which also looks to support generous host communities and countries. And in that respect I want to commend Jordan's recent announcement that they will allow all registered refugees, regardless of nationality, access to subsidised public health care in their continued support provided to refugees across all sectors. Indeed, we commend the generosity of all countries in the region who have hosted Syrian refugees for so long.

The entrenched conflict in Syria and the failure to reach a political solution or even a lasting, nationwide ceasefire continues to prevent large scale returns. And whilst we hope that Syrians will ultimately be able to return home, we agree with the United Nations judgment that conditions in Syria do not currently allow for this. We continue to look to UNHCR to uphold the principles and the thresholds which should be met before facilitating returns and we agree with the High Commissioner regarding the importance of measures to avert the ongoing acceleration of forced displacement. In north-west Syria, where over one million civilians were displaced as a consequence of the most recent conflict, preserving the ongoing ceasefire and extending the mandate of the UN cross-border aid mechanism are our priorities for averting further displacement.

In Myanmar, the recent escalation of violence in Rakhine and Chin has led to significant new displacement. This uptick in violence risks setting back

efforts aimed at creating conditions conducive to the safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation of Rohingya refugees. We welcomed Myanmar's recent announcement that the MOU with UNDP and UNHCR has been extended until June 2021. However, more progress is required on creating conditions to allow for Rohingya repatriation. This remains important and urgent, given the increasing desperation in the camps in Cox's Bazaar, the threat posed by COVID and the perilous boat journeys that refugees continue to risk in the Bay of Bengal, facilitated by ruthless traffickers, for which a recent regional solution is essential. And we have urged the governments of Myanmar to set up a transparent and credible long term plan to advance these priorities. We hope they will use their report to the International Court of Justice to do this, that they will publish it as part of the commitment to transparency. And let me also just pay tribute, and again thank, the Government and people of Bangladesh for their incredible generosity in supporting so many refugees on their territory.

Finally, Mr President, let me say that the United Kingdom remains committed to doing its part to meet the needs of the some 50 million internally displaced persons across the globe, 90 % of whom are displaced as a result of conflict and violence. We are a long standing advocate and supporter of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, which we believe represents a critical opportunity to galvanise political attention, to tackle the growing challenge of internal displacement and find solutions that all countries can take forward. I thank you, Mr. President.

UK calls for drastic action in Yemen as coronavirus infections reach one million

The UK Minister for the Middle East, James Cleverly MP, has expressed his deep concern at the rapidly rising number of coronavirus infections in Yemen amid an ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis.

Infections may have already reached one million, according to UK aid-funded research by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine which projects a worst-case scenario of up to 85,000 deaths.

During a 'virtual visit', involving calls with senior figures from the Yemeni authorities and the UN, Mr Cleverly set out how the UK is supporting the coronavirus response in Yemen and called for drastic action to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe.

The Minister highlighted the need for further support to the UN, which fell \$1 billion short of its target at the Saudi-hosted pledging conference earlier this month. The UK pledged £160 million at the conference, one of the

biggest donations on the day, to support the frontline coronavirus response.

The pledge takes the UK's total commitment to nearly £1 billion since the conflict began in 2014, which has helped to feed millions of Yemenis, as well as provide access to water and sanitation.

After 6 years of conflict and the recent Houthi offensive on Marib, Mr Cleverly stressed to Yemen's leaders that the only way to permanently end the suffering is with a comprehensive political solution.

He urged the parties to swiftly agree to the proposals presented by the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Martin Griffiths.

During the visit, Mr Cleverly said:

This visit has allowed me to hear about the devastating impact coronavirus is already having in Yemen, and I was deeply concerned to hear that there have been over a million cases. All parties to the conflict must work with the UN so there is safe access for food and medicine supplies.

The virtual nature of the visit meant I was able to see how UK aid is helping Yemeni people by seeing the inside of a hospital, homes and camps, as well as talking to vulnerable people receiving support.

I am grateful to all of those working to deliver vital life-saving aid to Yemen, which is needed now more than ever as coronavirus continues to spread across the country. But only a political solution can end the misery and prevent even more loss of life. I urge Yemen's leaders to redouble their efforts and agree to the UN's proposals.

Notes to editors

- The £160 million package, from the UK Government, announced recently will help to tackle the spread of coronavirus in Yemen and is expected to provide over 700,000 medical consultations, train 12,000 healthcare workers to work safely in a coronavirus environment, and provide a much-needed boost to nearly 4,000 health centres to continue providing existing health services.
- The new funding also aims to provide support to at least 300,000 vulnerable people each month to help them buy food and household essentials, treat 40,000 children for malnutrition and provide 1 million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation.
- UK funded modelling by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine predicts that, with few mitigation measures in place, there may already have been over 1 million coronavirus infections in Yemen. In total, the model predicts that there could be up to 10 million people infected with between 62,000 and 85,000 deaths in a worst case scenario.

[Supporting agritech exports to Ukraine](#)

About the transaction: Legume Technology

Region	Nottinghamshire
Sector	Agritech – inoculants
Export destination	Ukraine
UKEF support	Export insurance

Nottinghamshire-based [Legume Technology](#) manufactures a range of specialist fertilisers using natural bacteria to replace chemical fertilisers for pulse crops. The company has distributors throughout Europe, Africa and North America.

One country where orders for its products have been increasing steadily is Ukraine. The company wanted to increase its business further to distributors covering Ukraine's soy bean sector and wanted to insure against the risk of non-payment. However, it was unable to obtain cover from the private sector due to the unstable political situation in the country.

We've worked with the company to issue [export insurance policies](#) that cover the non-payment risk on its fertiliser exports.

Dr Bruce Knight, Managing Director, Legume Technology, said:

The help we received from UKEF gave us the confidence to put time and money into stock for Ukraine. This has given us both security for our current employees and the confidence to increase production capacity.

Putting the right finance and insurance in place can give you the exporting edge, helping you to win contracts, fulfil orders and get paid.

[Tell us about your business](#)

[UN Human Rights Council 43: Interactive Dialogue on Libya](#)

Thank you, Mr President,

High Commissioner, the UK welcomes your critical efforts towards accountability in Libya, and welcomes the Government of National Accord's commitment to work with the OHCHR and this Council.

The UK is gravely concerned by the continued deterioration in the human rights situation in Libya, and the recent reports of concerning activities attributed to both sides in the conflict, including reprisal attacks, the discovery of mass graves, and continuing civilian casualties from attacks and explosive remnants of war.

We condemn all human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including indiscriminate attacks, unlawful killings, sexual and gender-based violence, and the silencing of journalists, activists and human rights defenders. The case of parliamentarian Seham Sergiwa, and all politically motivated disappearances and intimidation, must be investigated.

The persistent climate of impunity must be addressed. We support the draft resolution establishing an independent, international fact finding mission.

The UK urges all parties to commit to an immediate ceasefire and engage meaningfully in the UN-led political process, which is essential to improving human rights.

High Commissioner,

How closely is your office working with the UN in Libya to ensure that human rights issues are factored fully into the UN approach?

[Next phase of NHS coronavirus \(COVID-19\) app announced](#)

This next phase will bring together the work done so far on the NHS COVID-19 app and the new Google/Apple framework.

Following rigorous field testing and a trial on the Isle of Wight, we have identified challenges with both our app and the Google/Apple framework.

This is a problem that many countries around the world, like Singapore, are facing and in many cases only discovering them after whole population roll-out.

As a result of our work, we will now be taking forward a solution that brings together the work on our app and the Google/Apple solution. This is an important step, allowing us to develop an app that will bring together the functionality required to carry out contact tracing, but also making it easy to order tests, and access proactive advice and guidance to aid self-

isolation.

NHS Test and Trace is already working to stop the spread of coronavirus and save lives. Building on our previous work, data published today (18 June) shows that tens of thousands more people who may have otherwise unwittingly spread the virus are now remaining safely at home.

Joint statement from Baroness Dido Harding, Executive Chair of NHS Test and Trace and Matthew Gould, CEO, NHSX:

3 weeks ago we launched NHS Test and Trace as a brand new, end-to-end service, to help control the spread of COVID-19 and we are hugely grateful for the way the public have responded to protect those around them.

Our ambition is to develop an app which will enable anyone with a smartphone to engage with every aspect of the NHS Test and Trace service, from ordering a test through to accessing the right guidance and advice. This will support our vision of helping more people get back to the most normal life possible at the lowest risk.

Our response to this virus has and will continue to be as part of an international effort. That is why as part of a collaborative approach we have agreed to share our own innovative work on estimating distance between app users with Google and Apple, work that we hope will benefit others, while using their solution to address some of the specific technical challenges identified through our rigorous testing.

We will also draw on the invaluable insight from all of those who trialled the app on the Isle of Wight – and the brilliant teams who have worked on it to date – to build an app that can form part of the end-to-end NHS Test and Trace service, and this insight will be integral to the next phase of development.

Crucially, NHS Test and Trace is already playing a vital role in helping us stop the spread of the virus. We will keep learning, improving and refining to build a high-quality service on which all of us can depend and to have the right technology in place.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Our approach to the virus, whether that's on vaccines, testing, treatments or cures, has been that we are willing to back innovative solutions and to be ambitious.

We knew from the start that we would need to test and learn as we developed this new technology. The NHS COVID-19 app has undergone some of the most rigorous testing in the world – utilising a real

world trial on the Isle of Wight pilot and in a series of field tests – and I want to thank all of those involved.

As we enter this next phase of research and development we remain determined to continue in our ambition to develop an app which meets the technical, security and user needs of the public and which can complement the NHS Test and Trace service.

Countries across the globe have faced challenges in developing an app which gets all of these elements right, but through ongoing international collaboration we hope to learn, improve and find a solution which will strengthen our global response to this virus.

International evidence shows the importance of a comprehensive human contact tracing service underpinned with a huge, nationwide testing capacity which is now available through the NHS Test and Trace service. Any future app would complement this service.

Alongside the launch of this end-to-end service, extensive testing of a new contact tracing app has been undertaken, building on the initial trial phase on the Isle of Wight with a series of field tests to develop a viable product which could be introduced nationally.

Rigorous field testing is an integral part of any project of this scale and ambition and the focus has been on identifying solutions to the issues which have emerged.

Through the systematic testing, a number of technical challenges were identified – including the reliability of detecting contacts on specific operating systems – which cannot be resolved in isolation with the app in its current form.

Google/Apple's announcement that they would make their application programming interface (API) available, if a number of conditions were met, allowed exploration of how our technology could work alongside their solution to begin, while also closely following the latest international evidence.

While it does not yet present a viable solution, at this stage an app based on the Google/Apple API appears most likely to address some of the specific limitations identified through our field testing. However, there is still more work to do on the Google/Apple solution which does not currently estimate distance in the way required.

Based on this, the focus of work will shift from the current app design and to work instead with Google and Apple to understand how using their solution can meet the specific needs of the public.