

UK's Middle East and North Africa Director ends visit to Lebanon

World news story

Mr Hickey met with senior Lebanese officials, local experts, international partners and visited UK funded projects supporting the most vulnerable in Lebanon.



Mr. Hickey, accompanied by British Ambassador to Lebanon Dr Ian Collard, held meetings with Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati and Caretaker Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib. Discussions focused on the latest developments in the country and the UK's support to the people of Lebanon. At Hona Beirut Café an initiative led by March Lebanon NGO funded by the UK's Conflict Stability and Security Fund, he met with a group of young people from marginalised areas in Tripoli and Beirut. The programme has helped transform their futures to become agents of change, delivering community service projects through skills training, professional capacity building and psycho-social support. Mr Hickey also met with senior, NGO and donor development and humanitarian partners working on Lebanon for an overview of the severe challenges the country is going through and the impact on vulnerable communities in particular. And he had a discussion with former recipients of the UK Government's prestigious Chevening scholarships programme.

At the end of his visit, Mr Hickey said:

I come at a time when Lebanon is going through an unprecedented economic crisis that is hugely impacting its people. What needs to be done is clear. Lebanon's leadership must act immediately by implementing urgent reforms including the conclusion of an IMF deal. The UK stands ready to help but first we must see actions by Lebanon's politicians. Without that, Lebanon cannot stand on its feet and regain the trust of the international community.

I also had the privilege of meeting a group of our Chevening Alumni who are doing amazing work across different fields for the good of

their country. At Hona Beirut Café, it was rewarding to hear the positive impact our project is having on the lives of young people and to hear their concerns, aspirations and hopes for a better Lebanon.

The UK will continue to be a friend to the people of Lebanon, and particularly its most vulnerable, including refugees.

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