

EARL OF MINTO
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

MSU/4/8/1/1/is

18 December 2023

Dear Lord Lancaster,

Thank you for your question on 6 December during the Urgent Question session where you asked if any of the 74 tonnes of humanitarian aid we have delivered to Egypt has reached Gaza.

As you will have heard from our Secretary of State for Defence, four RAF flights carrying a total of 74 tonnes of humanitarian aid landed in Egypt on 25 October, 2 November, 3 November and 23 November. The UK has supplied lifesaving items such as wound care packs, water filters and solar powered lights. The aid delivered also included vital enabling equipment for the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, such as forklift trucks, belt conveyors and lighting towers, to manage and deliver aid more effectively. The most recent of the flights carried 23 tonnes of humanitarian aid, including 4,500 blankets and 4,500 sleeping mats for distribution by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

We continue to call for immediate, safe and unimpeded, humanitarian access for lifesaving aid to reach civilians. However, limited supplies are currently being allowed through the crossing at Rafah following inspection by the Israeli authorities.

We can confirm that the 74 tonnes of aid have been handed over to the consignee, the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, for onward distribution by UNRWA and other partners. The Qatar negotiated pause in combat operations lasted for seven days (to 30 Nov) and saw approximately 200 trucks of aid entering Gaza each day. In the period between 1 Dec and 8 Dec an estimated 650 trucks carrying aid entered Gaza. At present, the data regarding what aid is reaching the affected civilian population is very limited.

The UK has uplifted the humanitarian funding to the Occupied Palestinian Territories for Palestinian civilians by £60m. The first tranche of £30m has been programmed and allocations for the remaining £30m are being finalised. By utilising trusted partners, the UK has enhanced safeguards against aid diversion (for example, vetting, mapping, and oversight of downstream partners).

Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

We will continue to support the FCDO-led effort to pursue viable routes to deliver urgently needed humanitarian aid and to use our engagements in the region to urge Israel to open other border crossings to enable more aid to reach civilians in need.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Timothée Minto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'T' and a stylized 'M'.

EARL OF MINTO