

UK statement to LDC Ministerial

Ambassador Jonathan Allen

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, thank you for inviting the United Kingdom to take part today. As a partner of the UN Group of Friends of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the UK welcomes the opportunity to come together, albeit virtually, at a time when the world is dealing with the greatest crisis of our generation.

COVID-19 began as a health crisis, but we know the secondary impacts are wide-ranging and devastating, creating both economic and humanitarian crises. The impact on our economies, education, livelihoods, and food systems will be felt for years to come.

We know that COVID-19 has furthered inequality in the world; with the poorest and most vulnerable at greatest risk. The pandemic has also reminded us how inter-connected the world is, and how a global challenge requires a globally coordinated response.

Protecting those most at risk and leaving no one behind is central to the UK's COVID-19 response. This means putting inclusion at the heart of humanitarian planning and response.

This year, we have appointed the UK's first Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs, Nick Dyer, who will spearhead our combined diplomatic and UK aid effort on this vital agenda. In addition, the UK will commit \$153 million to provide food relief to over 6 million people and prevent famine in countries hit by conflict and COVID-19.

The UK's 0.7% ODA target is enshrined in law and we donate 0.2% to LDCs. We are also one of the biggest donors to combatting COVID-19 and have pledged over a billion dollars of UK aid to tackle the virus to date.

The UK is at the forefront of efforts to develop a COVID-19 vaccine and has committed \$322 million to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), to support their efforts in developing this.

We support a global approach to the rapid development and scaled-up manufacture of vaccines that are distributed and accessible to all who need them. We proudly hosted the successful Global Vaccine Summit this year in London.

To effectively meet the needs of vulnerable people and communities, we must address all the forms of exclusion that they face. Our \$23 million Rapid Response Fund is based on inclusion, protection, gender, and safeguarding. We are committed to playing our part.

With an estimated 71 million people predicted to be pushed into extreme poverty as a result of the pandemic, coordinated global action for a sustainable and fair recovery has never been more important.

No one is safe until we are all safe.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an invaluable framework for collaboration, partnership and building back better. They recognise the connection between healthy lives, healthy societies and a healthy environment.

COVID-19 has affected all of the SDGs, which were already off-track before the pandemic. The world needs the SDGs more than ever and the UK remains committed to them. We must now accelerate progress toward reaching them by 2030.

While we remain committed to tackling the immediate impact of the outbreak, we must also seize this opportunity to create greener, healthier, more inclusive, and resilient economies and societies.

We were pleased to co-lead the Recovering Better for Sustainability workstream with the EU, Fiji, and Rwanda - part of the UN Secretary General's Financing for Development initiative.

We recognise the importance of addressing the particular needs of vulnerable countries such as Small Island Developing States, Least-

Developed Countries, and others whose specific characteristics demand urgent and targeted solutions.

The UK, along with our co-leads, will use the Recovering Better workstream to drive a green and inclusive recovery, stressing support for the most vulnerable, to build fairer societies and ensure no one is left behind.

We will continue to champion these ambitions through our presidencies of COP26 and the G7 in 2021. Accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals of the Paris Agreement is a huge task, but it is also a worthy and indeed critical one.

We must not fail.