

Defence Secretary meets Ukrainian counterpart in Kyiv



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Defence Secretary Ben Wallace travelled to Ukraine this week for high level talks with his counterpart about the UK's continued support amid Russia's brutal invasion.

The Defence Secretary met with Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov to discuss the Armed Forces of Ukraine's ongoing offensive to recapture and liberate territory seized in Putin's illegal war.

They spoke about how UK equipment has been brought to bear on the battlefield, along with the effectiveness of soldiers trained by the UK and other partners.

The pair also talked about the next steps in the war as Ukraine battles to free itself from Russia's occupation, and what further support the UK can provide.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I was delighted to have visited my good friend Oleksii Reznikov in Kyiv this week to discuss more military aid and help to Ukraine.

Our support to their fight against Russian aggression goes from strength to strength and will continue all through 2023 and beyond.

The visit came in the same week as Russia orchestrated sham referenda in the Ukrainian regions of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk and Donetsk ahead of a plan to illegally annex them, while the Ukrainian offensive continues to take back territory in the north-east of the country.

The UK is one of the leading donors of military aid to Ukraine, committing £2.3 billion in 2022 – second only to the US – and the PM last week announced that this amount would be matched or exceeded in 2023.

Just weeks before the Defence Secretary's visit, the UK committed to donating more than 120 logistics vehicles in the latest tranche of gifted military equipment.

The UK has also trained more than 27,000 members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine since 2015, including thousands of new recruits in the UK this year, with help from allies and partners.

The training teaches troops key skills such as weapons handling, first aid, fieldcraft, patrol tactics, vehicle-mounted operations and trench and urban warfare, which will give them a crucial edge on the battlefield.

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