

UK to support Haiti earthquake response with humanitarian assistance and Royal Navy ship



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The UK Government has today (Thursday 19 August) announced a package of up to £1 million of initial support to Haiti, as the country recovers from the recent devastating earthquake.

This is in addition to significant UK contributions to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, the Red Cross Disaster Relief Emergency Fund and the Start Fund, which have allocated funding of £5.8 million, £600,000, and £250,000 respectively.

The Royal Navy ship RFA WAVE KNIGHT will also support the US contribution to the international humanitarian response.

The Wave-class fast fleet tanker – part of the Royal Navy’s Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) – will serve as a landing pad for US military helicopters responding to the crisis in Haiti.

Following a request for international assistance from the Haitian Government, the UK will send a team of medical experts and a UK humanitarian expert is deploying from the UN to provide support.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Communities in the Caribbean can rely on the Royal Navy to come to their aid when disaster strikes. The Royal Navy has a proud history of supporting British Overseas Territories and other partners in the Caribbean during hurricane season. I’m proud that the UK can now play a part in the US effort to respond to the devastating earthquake in Haiti.

Experts from the UK's Emergency Medical Team (UK EMT) will be deployed to Haiti this week to assess requirements for medical assistance and identify additional support.

The team of 4 medical experts from the UK, Italy and France specialise in emergency medicine, rehabilitation, and logistics, as well as humanitarian healthcare. They are expected to deploy for up to 2 weeks.

UK Minister for the Caribbean Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

It is at times like this that the international community must come together to help those in crisis. The UK's support will add to Haiti's efforts to provide emergency disaster relief to those most vulnerable, including access to vital healthcare and sanitation.

On top of this, a UK humanitarian expert will arrive in Haiti as part of a UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) mission, to help assess damage and humanitarian needs resulting from the earthquake.

The UK will also support the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) who will aid the Haiti Civil Protection General Directorate (DGPC) with operations and co-ordination.

Notes to editors

UK-Med is a frontline medical aid charity that provides the doctors and nurses for the UK EMT. Humanity & Inclusion UK is an international disability charity that provides rehabilitation specialists to the UK EMT.

The UNDAC team is part of the international emergency response system for sudden-onset emergencies. It is designed to assist the United Nations and governments of disaster-affected countries in meeting international needs for early and qualified information during the first phase of a sudden-onset emergency, as well as in the coordination of incoming international relief at national level and/or at the site of the emergency.

The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) has agreed a pay out of approximately \$40 million to Haiti. The UK is a founding donor, and subsidises Haiti's subscription as a leading donor to the Caribbean Development Bank.

The UK is a longstanding supporter of the CERF. In 2020, the UK was one of the largest donors to the Fund, providing £66m (\$88.6m) to support responses to humanitarian need across the globe.

The UK supported the establishment of the Start Fund in 2014 and remains a major contributor to it, committing £49.5m from July 2018 until July 2022.

The FCDO has committed a £6m UK contribution to the DREF (£1.5m per year 2020-2023).

On RFA WAVE KNIGHT/ HMS MEDWAY

Two British naval ships – RFA WAVE KNIGHT and HMS MEDWAY – are currently deployed to the Caribbean to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. They have been deployed to the Caribbean since May 2021 to support British Overseas Territories and other partner nations the region throughout hurricane season.

RFA WAVE KNIGHT arrived off the west coast of Haiti in the early hours of Wednesday (BST). It will allow US helicopters to refuel as they fly to and from the island, extending their range and time available to support the disaster relief efforts.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary is the civilian support branch of the Royal Navy, providing vital logistical and operational support to military operations.

Photography and footage from RFA WAVE KNIGHT is available at www.defenceimagery.mod.uk

For further updates follow @DefenceHQ/@DefenceHQPress. You can contact the MOD press office on 020 7218 7907.

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Contact the FCDO Communication Team via email (monitored 24 hours a day) in the first instance, and we will respond as soon as possible.

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