



Chris Heaton-Harris
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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about famine in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

I share your concerns about the prevailing humanitarian situation in DRC – one of the world's poorest countries, with an estimated 66 million people living in absolute poverty. As you note, it is also the world's largest food security crisis, with over 27 million people requiring food assistance.

The UK is one of the largest bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) donors to DRC and tackling severe food insecurity and malnutrition is one of the UK's top priorities in country. UK ODA support is providing life-saving assistance to three million people and, diplomatically, ministers and officials are playing a leading role in raising the profile of the humanitarian crisis.

More broadly, in responding to the increased risk of famine, caused in part by COVID-19, the Foreign Secretary launched a 'Call to Action' last September, which has since resulted in an additional £180 million ODA being provided to more than seven million of the most at risk people in developing countries, helping to alleviate extreme hunger. DRC is one of the main beneficiaries of this. Nick Dyer was appointed as the UK's Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs in the same month in order to drive forward this agenda.

Famine prevention is a priority theme of the UK's G7 Presidency. As part of this, Nick Dyer is chairing a Panel on Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crisis to agree a Compact to prevent famine in 2021 and to reduce the risks of it in the future.

The impact of the pandemic on the UK economy has forced us to take tough but necessary decisions, including temporarily reducing the overall amount we spend on aid to 0.5% of GNI. We will remain a world-leading ODA donor and still spend more than £10 billion this year to fight poverty, tackle climate change and improve global health.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY