

Press release

Tánaiste announces €1 million in emergency assistance following Kakhovka Dam destruction

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The Tánaiste and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin, today announced €1 million of Irish Aid support to the people of Ukraine who are experiencing an additional humanitarian crisis following devastating flooding as a result of the destruction of the Kakhovka dam.

This funding will support the work of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society who are a pivotal part of the local response. Approximately 16,000 people have already been directly affected with concerns that this number will grow in coming days. Evacuations are underway and it is expected that thousands will be temporary displaced in the region.

The €1 million allocation will support immediate and urgent humanitarian needs on the ground. The funds will be allocated to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for the direct support of the local response by the Ukraine Red Cross Society (URCS). The IFRC are long standing partners of Irish Aid and URCS members are already working on the ground to support the victims of this catastrophe.

Announcing the funding, the Tánaiste said:

"The unfolding crisis in southern Ukraine will place extraordinary pressure on an already vulnerable population. Funding from Ireland will support a locally led response and provide assistance to those most impacted by this catastrophe."

The Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant Dam (Kakhovka Dam) in southern Ukraine was destroyed early on Tuesday, 6 June, unleashing a torrent of flood water downstream. Up to 42,000 people are at risk from flooding on both sides of the Dnipro River. 2600 homes have already been flooded with 1700 people evacuated to neighbouring regions. The Kakhovka Reservoir, which was formed by the dam and stretches 240 kilometres, is one of the largest water sources in the south of the country. It provides water supply, including drinking water, to major industrial cities, including Kryvyi Rih, Marhanets, Nikopol and Pokrov, home to nearly 700,000 people.

Environmental disasters during conflict severely exacerbate humanitarian need, causing long-lasting and in some cases irreversible damage. These disasters not only affect ecosystems, but can impact infrastructure, access to food, water and essential services, as well as cause displacement and loss of life. The destruction of the Kakhovka Dam could result in fields in southern Ukraine turning into deserts as early as next year and has already been labelled as a biosphere catastrophe that, beyond agriculture in the area, has destroyed the environment and devastated local wildlife. Following the return of the water levels to normal, water pollution and potential health hazards are expected to be very high.

URCS Emergency Response Teams and volunteers from three regions were activated to support the affected population since early morning on the 6th of June. Local URCS teams will assist with the provision of emergency shelter, clean drinking water and food, mobile health care including psychological support, and hygiene centres. The IFRC has also sought assistance from its international membership and will deploy a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Emergency Response Team to provide technical expertise and support to their Ukrainian colleagues.

Notes

Irish Aid, the government's programme for overseas development, is an integral part of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network. Their secretariat supports local Red Cross and Red Crescent action in more than 192 countries, bringing together almost 15 million

volunteers for the good of humanity.

The EU and Member States have collectively pledged assistance of approximately €68 billion to Ukraine and its people (financial, humanitarian, emergency, budgetary, military assistance, hosting of refugees).

In 2022 Ireland provided €20 million in direct humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and neighbouring countries.

EU member states through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism have provided over €647 million of in-kind assistance such as medical supplies, food, and shelter. Ireland has contributed a range of materials including equipment for Ukraine's energy sector.

The European Commission has also allocated €733 million in humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and Moldova.

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