



The Lord Collins of Highbury  
Minister for Africa  
House of Lords  
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29 January 2025

Dear Lord Collins,

FACT-FINDING VISIT TO BLUE NILE STATE, SUDAN

Time is short for displaced families in Jabarona Refugee Camp, Blue Nile State. Months of heavy rainfall will cut-off the camp from outside help.

We have five urgent concerns:

**1. No humanitarian access**

Displaced populations in Blue Nile have previously been isolated for up to four months due to flooding. We estimate 48,000 people are currently displaced in Jabarona Camp, located near the Yabus River. Heavy rainfall – which could arrive as early as April/May – will hinder humanitarian access. Main roads are only passable in the dry season. River transport is too dangerous. The local community are still reeling from the death of one of the region's last practising doctors, Dr Ahmed Zakaria, who drowned while crossing a river during last year's rainy season.

**2. No food**

Food is scarce. Displaced families resort to eating roots, grass and leaves for survival. Among them are pregnant women, groups of unaccompanied children, and new mothers whose infants sleep all day from hunger and exhaustion. In the wider Yabus region, flooding will damage crops and transport routes, driving-up food prices and stretching already-limited resources.

**3. No shelter**

Jabarona Camp is not a formal camp. It is an improvised space with no infrastructure. There are no tents set up by the UNHCR or any other agency. Displaced families seek shelter under trees. Some build temporary structures with materials from the bush that will not withstand the effects of flooding and heavy rains.

#### 4. No hospital

Epidemics are a recurrent phenomena in Blue Nile State. Rainfall will damage key WASH infrastructure and increase the caseload of diseases such as cholera and malaria. There are no hospitals in Yabus or surrounding towns. Many medical clinics were abandoned after major aid organisations decided to withdraw from the region following the outbreak of war in 2023. The nearest hospital is across the border in South Sudan.

#### 5. No outside help

Last year was the deadliest year on record for aid workers in Sudan. As recently as December 2024, the World Food Programme's field office in Yabus was hit by aerial bombardment, killing three staff members. Other big agencies, such as Médecins Sans Frontières, have suspended many of their operations due to insecurity. The remaining humanitarian presence surrounding Jabarona Camp is extremely limited. Aid workers are fearful of future attacks, with very low capacity. Displaced families are left to fend for themselves.

Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART) has teamed up with Guernsey Overseas Aid & Development Committee (OADC) and Compassion and Sustainable Development Africa (CSDA) to provide emergency relief to people in need. We are confident our joint efforts will save lives. We are realistic, however, that the scale of the crisis requires a much larger humanitarian response. **We urge the UK Government to step up its operations in Blue Nile State. There is an urgent need for unfettered humanitarian access in Jabarona Camp and the surrounding region before the rainy season begins.**

Yours sincerely,



Sam Mason  
CEO