

# Hammond: I reject idea millions live in dire poverty

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Philip Hammond speaks to Newsnight

**The chancellor has rejected claims there are millions of people living in dire poverty in Britain.**

"Look around you; that's not what we see in this country," Philip Hammond told Newsnight.

Mr Hammond accepted that some people were struggling.

5 But he said the government had worked to tackle the causes of poverty and rejected a United Nations report that claimed austerity had increased poverty.

Published last month, the rapporteur accused the government of plunging millions into poverty, in some instances with "tragic consequences".

Mr Hammond said: "I reject the idea that there are vast numbers of people facing dire poverty in this country.

10 "I don't accept the UN rapporteur's report at all. I think that's a nonsense. Look around you, that's not what we see in this country.

"Of course there are people struggling with the cost of living. I understand that. But the point being is that we are addressing these things through getting to the root causes."

### **System must 'evolve'**

- 15 The chancellor said that for many people, the market economy was not working as it was "supposed to", and the idea the economy is "generating and distributing wealth is at odds with the practice that they are experiencing".

He said the government should be ensuring the market was "delivering in the way that the textbooks tell us it will work."

- 20 "To deliver through competition, the best deal for consumers and to distribute wealth in a way that is fair."

"To the extent that it's not working, we have got to evolve the system." [...]