

Cooperation between the UN and the Arab League: UK at the Security Council

Thank you, Mr President. I thank the Secretary-General, the Arab League Secretary-General and Ms Alaqil for their briefings.

Regional cooperation has a vital role to play in conflict prevention. We therefore welcome cooperation between the UN and Arab League, and thank today's briefers and the UAE for convening this session. We also welcome adoption of the Arab League's PRST.

Sadly, war and conflict continue to scar the region. The Syrian conflict, for example, has left 14 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Assad's regime bears responsibility for this tragedy, as it continues to obstruct peace efforts. We therefore welcome the League's continued suspension of Syria's membership and urge against normalisation with Assad.

In Yemen, seven million Yemenis are now on the brink of famine. We therefore call for generous humanitarian funding and welcome the UN Special Envoy's consultations. We also condemn the ongoing Houthi terrorist cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia and the UAE, including the reprehensible attacks on Saudi civilian infrastructure last week.

We must also remain steadfast in our commitment to a two-state solution based on 1967 lines. To end the conflict, we need to both address the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and safeguard Israel's security.

In Libya, there is a real risk of escalation that could unravel the hard-won ceasefire and threaten stability. We urge both sides of the current impasse to accept the offer from Special Adviser Stephanie Williams to facilitate a dialogue. For, as Libya lurches between political crises, it is the Libyan people who suffer most. It is therefore incumbent on all of us to facilitate a path to the elections the Libyan people are waiting for.

Mr President, I would also like to highlight our collective role in tackling catastrophic climate change – which we know is a driver of conflict – and in particular, the role of Egypt and the UAE as they take on the presidencies for COP27 and COP28. During our 'Presidency year' we will work closely with them to ensure commitments made at COP26 are delivered.

Mr President, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has contributed to a bleak humanitarian picture. As the Secretary-General has said, in "Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan and Yemen, their bread basket is being bombed. Ukraine alone provides more than half of the World Food Programme's wheat supply."

So we hope Arab League leaders will continue to support all efforts, including in the General Assembly, to bring an end to this war.

I thank you, Mr President.