

HRC 51: UK Statement under Item 2 General Debate on Acting High Commissioner Oral Update

Thank you Mr President,

Acting High Commissioner,

The former High Commissioner's recent report on Xinjiang included credible evidence of arbitrary and discriminatory detention, torture, sexual and gender-based violence, forced sterilisations and abortions, and the destruction of religious sites. This report provides further compelling and harrowing evidence of the extent of China's efforts to silence and repress Uyghurs and other minority groups in the region including acts that may constitute crimes against humanity. China must allow independent UN experts to conduct unrestricted visits to Xinjiang to verify the findings. The Council must not stay silent as an ethnic and religious minority is so brutally targeted.

Turning our attention to other countries, in Sudan, violence, the killing of protestors and other human rights violations continue. We are disappointed that important progress made on human rights since the 2019 revolution has been lost following last year's coup. The UK urges the Sudanese authorities to allow peaceful protests, to deliver on their commitment to protect civilians, to implement the Juba Peace Agreement, and to hold those responsible for violations to account. All parties must recommit to Sudan's democratic transition to deliver the peace and justice the Sudanese people deserve.

In South Sudan, the human rights situation is appalling, evidenced by harrowing reports of violence, killings and widespread sexual violence. The UK calls on the Government of South Sudan to hold the perpetrators of these abuses to account, end impunity, and protect civilians. A secure, stable and enduring peace is essential. The Government should now implement the 2018 peace agreement, meeting the timelines set out in their recently announced Roadmap.

We are also deeply concerned by the recent violence seen in Libya, most notably on the weekend of 26 August when 32 people were killed and over a hundred injured. The Libyan authorities must prioritise the protection of civilians and respect the human rights of all Libyans.

Thank you