

# Human Rights Council Interactive Dialogue on Belarus: UK statement

Thank you,

We welcome the High Commissioner's report, which provides an opportunity to act with resolve on the human rights situation in Belarus.

The United Kingdom is gravely concerned about the fraudulent presidential elections and appalling violations, particularly the targeting of peaceful protesters and restrictions on freedom of expression.

We condemn the excessive use of force by the authorities. The Belarusian people face increasing repression by authorities acting with impunity. We are very concerned that two British diplomats were expelled for observing peaceful protests.

The UK imposed sanctions against Alexander Lukashenko and others responsible for violations.

The UK is engaging with all actors: the authorities, the opposition and civil society. We are doubling financial support to independent media and human rights organisations, with an extra £1.5 million over two years. Our Canada-UK Media Freedom Award was won by the Belarusian Association of Journalists, who bravely defend media freedom.

We repeat our call on Belarus to implement the recommendations of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism report, in particular the recommendation that new elections, held in accordance with international standards, are required.

Madame High Commissioner, what steps should the authorities take for a genuine dialogue with the people of Belarus?

Thank you.