

Iran's nuclear escalation is a threat to international peace and security: UK at Security Council

Thank you President.

I join others in thanking USG Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing. We welcome the Secretary General's thirteenth report on the implementation of resolution 2231 and thank the UN Secretariat for their continued professionalism and support.

Thanks also to Ambassador Byrne-Nason and His Excellency Olaf Skoog for their briefings and again to Ambassador Byrne-Nason for her, and her team's work, as 2231 Facilitator.

It is important that we are clear: Iran's nuclear programme has never been more advanced than it is today and Iran's nuclear escalation is a threat to international peace and security.

Iran has continued to improve its enrichment capabilities through developing, installing and using new advanced centrifuges; it has continued its rapid accumulation of uranium enriched up to 20% and highly enriched uranium up to 60%; and has continued to curtail IAEA monitoring, most recently switching off twenty-seven monitoring cameras from 8 June. Iran has also been producing uranium metal, which provides weapons-applicable knowledge.

At the current enrichment rate, by the end of this year, Iran is likely to have enough enriched material to rapidly produce HEU at 90% enrichment for several nuclear devices. Iran also continues to develop ballistic missiles in a way that is inconsistent with Annex B of resolution 2231.

Iran's nuclear escalation is undermining international peace and security and the global non-proliferation system and is in clear violation of resolution 2231.

President, there has been a deal on the table since March, following a year of intensive negotiations. At that point, there was a viable deal, which would return Iran to compliance with its commitments and the US to the deal – reversing Iran's nuclear escalation and lifting US sanctions related to the JCPoA.

However, Iran is refusing to take the opportunity, while making demands beyond the scope of the JCPoA. Iran should urgently take this deal. There will not be a better one and if a deal is not struck then Iran's nuclear escalation will cause the JCPoA to collapse. In that scenario, it will be incumbent on this Council to take decisive steps to ensure Iran does not develop a nuclear weapon.