

Reaching 'consensus between parties on developments that impact a shared natural resource'

Thank you Mr President. Let me begin thanking Special Envoy Onyanga-Onyanga, Director General Anderson and the Chargé d'Affaires of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their briefings today.

I would also like to welcome Their Excellences the Foreign Ministers of Egypt and Sudan, and the Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity of Ethiopia to our meeting today. The UK shares strong partnerships with all three nations and recognises the vital interests that each has in Nile waters.

Mr President, the UK places strong emphasis on consensus between parties on developments that impact a shared natural resource. We are pleased that many of the key elements needed to reach that consensus on the GERD are captured in the 2015 Declaration of Principles, in particular the principles Not To Cause Significant Harm and of Equitable and Reasonable Utilization.

Since the Declaration of Principles, the three parties have continued talks to reach a more detailed trilateral agreement on the filling and operation of the dam. We would like to thank the African Union, Chairperson Tshisekedi and former Chairperson Ramaphosa for their support to this process.

Mr President, we recognise that reaching agreement requires compromise by all parties. The United Kingdom notes Egypt and Sudan's disappointment that a resolution has yet to be reached, as well as the stated commitment of all three countries to the AU-led talks. The United Kingdom is confident that working together, and with the ongoing support of the African Union and the wider international community, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan have the strength and resolve to reach agreement to the benefit of all.

We call on all three sides to refrain from actions that undermine negotiations. We encourage them to engage constructively and urgently – in a spirit of compromise – to conclude negotiations and reach a mutually acceptable agreement.

Mr President, in concluding, let me once again reaffirm the United Kingdom's strong support for the AU-led process and the Governments of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan in their endeavours to reach an equitable, mutually acceptable agreement.

Thank you.