

Speech: “Our vote today against this resolution is a vote against the politicization of the Commission on the Status of Women.”

Thank you Chair,

The United Kingdom is firmly committed to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women plays a crucial role as a forum for building international consensus in support of gender equality, fulfilling the promise of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and ensuring gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

We continuously strive to advance gender equality both domestically and internationally. But it is not equality for the few, it is equality for all. We cannot accept in the name of equality the inherent discrimination of singling out one country alone, Israel; as this resolution clearly does. No other country is singled out in the same way.

The fact that the occupation has a detrimental impact on the status of Palestinian men and women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is without doubt. But today’s resolution focusses solely on Israel; how can this be acceptable in a region where women’s rights are so often and so tragically trampled upon?

The resolution fails to fully reflect the challenges that Palestinian women endure each and every day due to gender stereotypes, negative social and cultural norms, and the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that exist. Nor does it reflect the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority for the wellbeing of women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Our vote today against this resolution is a vote against the politicization of the Commission on the Status of Women. We remain committed to strengthening the Commission and the invaluable role it plays in the empowerment of women.

Indeed, many in this room share our longstanding position that Commission on the Status of Women is an inappropriate place for this sort of country-specific resolution to exist. Today we have acted in line with our longstanding position.

Ultimately, a lasting and negotiated settlement that ends the occupation and delivers peace, rights and security for both Palestinian and Israeli women alike is long overdue. The United Kingdom is committed to making progress towards this goal.

Thank you.