

# Tackling common challenges together with the European Union

Thank you, Mr President. We very much welcome High Representative Borrell's attendance at the Council today and thank him for his briefing.

We agree entirely with his emphasis on the importance of multilateralism. The UN-centred international rules-based system provides a foundation for coordinated and collective action, including through regional organisations, in order to address our biggest challenges, as exemplified so eloquently just now by Ambassador Kimani.

We welcome the role the EU has played in upholding international norms across a range of fora – from the G7 to the United Nations, including through the UNHRC special session on Myanmar that we jointly chaired earlier this year.

As High Representative Borrell set out, there is no greater global challenge than that posed by COVID-19. As Foreign Secretary Raab emphasised in this Council in February, and as we subsequently agreed in Resolution 2565, combatting and sustainably recovering from COVID-19 requires greater national, regional, and international cooperation and solidarity.

So we welcome the EU's staunch support, as High Representative Borrell said, for the ACT-Accelerator and EU financial contributions to COVAX. The UK was proud to host the Global Vaccine Summit just over a year ago, which surpassed its target and raised \$8.8 billion.

We have made some progress but there is more to do. We look forward to continued co-operation with the EU as we work to recover from COVID-19 and better prepare ourselves for future pandemics, including through our shared support for a global pandemic treaty. And we look forward to welcoming the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the European Council and European Commission to the UK later this week for the G7 leaders meeting. We are using our G7 Presidency to promote global health objectives and to support the world's poorest.

Our shared work will need to continue at pace after the G7 as we head towards COP26 in Glasgow, where we hope that the world can finally turn the tide on the climate crisis. We are grateful for the steps already taken by the European Union, including the submission of an ambitious 2030 NDC. We count on the European Union's support for an ambitious outcome and a cleaner, greener future for us all, but especially for those countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – the same countries that Prime Minister Johnson and other world leaders called on us to support in this Council in February. And I want to thank Mr Borrell for the important point he made about the link between climate change and climate security and the need for us to address that issue in this Council.

Mr President, multilateralism continues to be central to addressing issues

within the European sphere. Along with the European Union and other international partners, we have repeatedly called on Russia in the OSCE to cease its destabilising action in Ukraine. The United Kingdom will continue to work with the European Union and other partners in support of international law and the wider rules-based international system to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

On Belarus, we share High Representative Borrell's concern regarding the actions of the Belarusian authorities, including the forced landing of flight FR4978 and arrest of journalist Roman Protasevich. We continue to urge the Belarusian authorities to respect the will of the Belarusian people as well as their fundamental freedoms, human rights and the rule of law.

On the Western Balkans, we strongly support the EU-facilitated Dialogue, under EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajcak, on the normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo. We continue to encourage closer cooperation between the EU and NATO, to promote democratic values, prevent destabilisation, and facilitate progress towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The UK continues to play a significant role in the NATO presence in the Western Balkans, working with partners including EUFOR Op Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to support defence reform and peace.

Mr President, High Representative Borrell underlined the primary responsibility of this Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. And we recognise the contribution of the EU towards resolving issues on this Council's agenda.

This includes the role of the EU in support of a diplomatic solution to the revitalisation and restoration the JCPOA. We continue to work together to bring Iran back into compliance with its commitments and restore the benefits of this deal for all parties.

The EU and UK continue to work closely on Libya, including through engagement with the Berlin process towards a sustainable, Libyan-owned political settlement. And we support continued efforts to enforce the UN arms embargo through EUNAVFOR Operation IRINI.

We welcome the EU's continued focus on Africa, as set out just now by Ambassador Kimani.

In Somalia, we have been united with the EU and other international partners in calling for a consensus-based way forward on elections, and welcome the recent agreement between Somali leaders to that end. And of course we strongly support the work of the AU's AMISOM mission, and hope that the EU will be able to continue its essential financial support to building Somali security.

Mr President, as we have shown in our work in the G7, here in New York at the UN, and across a range of shared global challenges, the EU and the UK share a resolve to tackle the common challenges we all face. This has included supporting human rights – including, as Mr Borrell said, for those in Hong

Kong – tackling conflict, coordinating on human rights sanctions and promoting the rights and prosperity of women including through girls' education.

I think you will agree, Mr President, that when we work together we are a force for the good in the world.

Thank you.