

Responding to COVID-19 and addressing human rights in Haiti

image.png

Statement by David Clay, UK Political Coordinator the UN, at the Security Council briefing on Haiti

Friday, 19 June

Thank you, Mr President. And thank you SRSB La Lime and Mr Létang, for your briefings.

Welcome the Secretary-General's second report on BINUH's activities. The UK recognises the extraordinary difficulties faced by Haiti since the Council last met to discuss BINUH. And I want to start by appreciating the hard work of the mission leadership and staff amidst increasingly challenging circumstances.

Mr President, I will make three brief points. First, the UK believes that a coordinated and holistic response to the COVID19 pandemic is critical. Second, urgent steps should now be taken to bolster human rights and accountability. Third, a roadmap out of Haiti's interminable political impasse is more essential than ever.

First, with regard to COVID19, it is clear that this pandemic presents a grave risk to Haiti, both in terms of the impact of the disease itself and its second order effects. As the health, humanitarian and economic effects of the crisis take hold, a coordinated and holistic response by the Haitian authorities and the international community is critical. The UK is encouraged by the quick adaptation of the UN system on the ground, and we call upon the DSRSG/RC/HC in particular to work closely with the Haitian authorities to help guide a coordinated approach.

Second, regarding human rights and accountability, the UK remains concerned about the lack of progress. That the perpetrators of massacres at La Saline and Bel Air continue to escape justice profoundly undermines efforts to build confidence and trust in the rule of law.

We also regret that the Haitian government has yet to honour its commitment to appoint a Minister for Human Rights. This appointment would be a valuable demonstration of Haiti's political will to safeguard human rights.

Finally with regard to the ongoing political impasse: Mr President, session after session, this Chamber [and the UN leadership] has sought to encourage the parties in Haiti set out a roadmap to overcome political deadlock and institutional paralysis. As the SG notes in his report, the collapse in February of dialogue efforts to reach an agreement on the needed roadmap for constitutional, institutional and structural reforms is yet another missed opportunity.

COVID19 has aggravated the existing risks to stability Haiti. The economy is faltering. Elections loom. Now, more than ever, all parties should come together in the national interest. Broad, inclusive dialogue is essential.

Thank you.

[UK launches landmark draft 'Murad Code' to support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence as COVID-19 pandemic increases suffering](#)

Speaking at the event, the UK's Minister of State for Human Rights Lord Ahmad, said:

We are determined to tackle these most abhorrent of crimes. The UK remains committed to take action – action to prevent violence, action to support survivors and tackle the stigma they face – the appalling sense of stigma – and action to hold perpetrators to account.

Yet, as we mark this important day, we know that conflict-related sexual violence is a pandemic we have yet to cure.

COVID-19 is an unprecedented threat to how we respond to these crimes. The impacts of this pandemic are stark.

Crucial medical and psychological services are directly at risk, as governments divert resources towards their response. Restrictions on movement limit physical routes for survivors to report crimes, or indeed to move to safety. Stay-at-home measures mean those in abusive situations are even more vulnerable to violence.

These are exceptional times. We must provide an exceptional response.

“That is why I am delighted, on behalf of the UK today, to announce that we are launching the draft Murad Code for global consultation. Developed with Nobel Peace Laureate, the courageous and incredible Nadia Murad, this code of conduct puts survivors rightly at the heart of our collective response.

It seeks to uphold international standards for recording the sensitive nature of sexual violence crimes. It prevents the further traumatising of survivors by ensuring that governments, international organisations, and indeed civil society actors adhere to the principles of the Code. It reinforces evidence collection, strengthening justice and accountability.

In light of this pandemic, the Murad Code is all the more urgent and important. Limited legal services are under increasing strain, and diverted government facilities and personnel have narrowed the bandwidth for safe, survivor-centred reporting and collection of evidence.

To succeed in eliminating the scourge of conflict-related sexual violence, more than ever today, now, in these most unusual and unprecedented of times, we must continue to work together to put survivors at the heart of all our work.

Lord Ahmad also urged UN members to consult and collaborate on the Murad Code, building international consensus to eradicate rape and other forms of sexual violence as weapons of war, and to give support in ways led by survivors themselves.

Letter from Mary Aiston, Director of Counter Avoidance, to the Loan Charge APPG

Mary Aiston, HMRC's Director for Counter Avoidance, has written to Rt Hon. Sir Edward Davey MP, Ruth Cadbury MP, and Rt Hon. Sir Mike Penning MP, co-chairs of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the loan charge. The letter responds to questions about HMRC's settlement opportunity letters and follow up calls.

Joint statement from Foreign Secretary and German Foreign Minister following bilateral meeting in Berlin

Press release

Following a bilateral meeting in Berlin today, British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas agreed the following statement



Today we reaffirmed our commitment to a strong and productive bilateral relationship between the United Kingdom and Germany, founded on our common European background and mutual desire to promote joint interests and shared values around the world.

We welcomed the High Level Meeting between the EU and the UK that took place on 15 June and exchanged views on our respective positions regarding the ongoing EU-UK negotiations. It was agreed that the intensification of talks next month was an important step to reach an agreement on the future EU/UK relationship before the transition period ends at the end of this year.

We welcomed the strong UK – German cooperation in the battle against Covid-19, whether it is the joint efforts of our scientists to advance cutting-edge research, the provision of crucial equipment to treat Covid-19 patients or each flying hundreds of the other's nationals safely home. We agreed to continue working closely together to support public health systems around the world, the role of the World Health Organisation, research into a vaccine and efforts to ensure its fair distribution globally, and appropriate measures to promote a sustainable international economic recovery. We reaffirmed the necessity of further efforts to mitigate the risks in the event of a potential second wave in the autumn.

We agreed to work together on many of the most important foreign policy issues facing the world today, from the Middle East Peace Process to our shared concerns at China's proposal to impose a national security law in Hong Kong. We looked forward to working closely together to raise climate ambition and to make a success of COP 26 and of the Biodiversity Cop 15. We continue to support UN-led efforts to resolve the ongoing conflicts in Libya and Yemen, and remain committed to seeking to alleviate the humanitarian suffering they have caused which threatens to be amplified by Covid-19 . We remain steadfast in our support for NATO, whose last Leaders' Meeting took place in London 2019, and discussed its current agenda.

We look forward to future opportunities to renew and intensify our high-level bilateral dialogue on key issues of mutual interest.

Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)

Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

For journalists

Published 19 June 2020

E3 foreign ministers' statement on the JCPoA: 19 June

We, the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, share fundamental common security interests, along with our European partners. One of them is upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and ensuring that Iran never develops a nuclear weapon. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) plays a key role in this respect.

Together, we have stated unequivocally our regret and concern at the decision by the United States to withdraw from the JCPoA and to re-impose sanctions on Iran. Since May 2018, we have worked tirelessly to preserve the agreement.

As E3, we have fully upheld our JCPoA commitments, including sanctions-lifting as foreseen under the terms of the agreement. In addition we have gone beyond the commitments required by the agreement to support legitimate trade with Iran, including through INSTEX, which is fully operational and facilitating transactions.

Since 2019, Iran has taken nuclear measures contrary to its commitments under the JCPoA. We are deeply concerned by those actions, which seriously undermine the non-proliferation benefits of the agreement. That is the reason why the E3 initiated the JCPoA's Dispute Resolution Mechanism on 14 January, in good faith and in hope of finding a diplomatic way forward, preserving the agreement and bringing Iran back to full compliance with its commitments under the JCPoA.

We urge Iran to pursue substantial discussions and actions in coordination with us and the other remaining JCPoA participants in this regard. To this end, the E3 reaffirm they are ready to engage in a meaningful and realistic approach and await a constructive Iranian response. We will seek a ministerial meeting to urge Iran to cooperate and to take stock of where we stand in the DRM process.

We also note with grave concern that despite the IAEA's continuous efforts, Iran has denied the access requested by the Agency for many months, which prevents the Agency from fulfilling its mandate, and risks seriously undermining the global safeguards system if no progress is made.

At the initiative of the E3, a resolution was adopted with a very strong majority at the latest IAEA Board of Governors. We commend the IAEA for its

work in verifying Iran's safeguards obligations, and call on Iran to cooperate in a timely and complete manner with the IAEA and to grant access to sites as requested by the Agency.

The E3 remain committed to fully implementing Resolution 2231 by which the JCPOA has been endorsed in 2015. However, we believe that the planned lifting of the UN conventional arms embargo established by Resolution 2231 next October would have major implications for regional security and stability. We recall that the EU embargoes on conventional arms exports and missile technology will remain in force until 2023. We wish to address the issue in close coordination with Russia and China as remaining participants to the JCPOA, as well as with all other Security Council Members, as well as other key stakeholders. We will be guided by these objectives: upholding the authority and integrity of the UN Security Council and working toward regional security and stability.

We firmly believe that any unilateral attempt to trigger UN sanctions snapback would have serious adverse consequences in the UNSC. We would not support such a decision which would be incompatible with our current efforts to preserve the JCPOA.

We are convinced that we must address shared concerns about Iran's nuclear program, its ballistic missile program and its destabilising regional activities in the long term. To this end, we continue to believe that the strategy of maximum pressure will not effectively serve this goal, and instead remain committed to holding Iran to account, while pursuing meaningful diplomacy and dialogue.

We remain committed to the JCPOA and, in order to preserve it, urge Iran to reverse all measures inconsistent with the agreement and return to full compliance without delay. We reaffirm our readiness to engage substantively with Iran.

Further information