

UN Human Rights Council 41: Eritrea

Thank you, Mr Vice-President,

The United Kingdom thanks Ms. Kravetz, for her report and her work over the past year. We are disappointed that the Government of Eritrea, as a member of this Council, has not engaged with the Special Rapporteur, or her predecessors.

We welcome Eritrea's increasing engagement with the Human Rights Council and encourage the Government to strengthen its cooperation with the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights in order to achieve improvements in the human rights situation in Eritrea.

Eritrea remains a priority country for the United Kingdom's work on human rights. We renew calls for the Government of Eritrea to reform the national service system, implement the constitution, respect freedom of religion or belief, respect freedom of expression and release all those in arbitrary detention. We strongly support the Council's continued focus on these issues.

The UK agrees with the Special Rapporteur's report of 16 May. We agree with the areas the Special Rapporteur identifies as being unaddressed and urge the Eritrean government to use the benchmarks as a tool for achieving meaningful and lasting progress on human rights.

Special Rapporteur,

We note the benchmarks you included in your report. How do you think these could be best used at an operational level, nationally and internationally?

Thank you, Mr Vice-President.