

UN Human Rights Council 41: UK Statement on Leprosy and Health

Thank you, Mr President,

The United Kingdom thanks the Special Rapporteur on leprosy for her report on the wrongful stereotyping and structural violence against women and children affected by leprosy.

The UK also thanks the Special Rapporteur for his report on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The UK believes in the importance of mental health and wellbeing having equal footing alongside physical health and we will persevere to remove the attached stigma and discrimination. We are increasing investment in mental health services so that UK citizens receive the help and support they need, including improving prevention and early intervention, especially with regard to children and young people.

We are committed to promoting wellbeing and galvanising global action to increase quality, human rights-based mental health services.

The UK hosted the first ever Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit and, along with Australia and Canada, co-founded the Alliance of Champions for Global Mental Health and Wellbeing. We are delighted that the Netherlands are hosting the second global summit and. Furthermore, working in partnership with the Netherlands, we have set up the first donor group on mental health and psychosocial support in crises.

Through UK Aid, we are also increasing efforts to deliver recovery-oriented, human rights and community-based mental health services. This March, the UK Government announced that it will match £2m of public donations to support mental health programmes across Sub-Saharan Africa.

What, in your view, is the main obstacle to achieving mental health services that are treated on an equal footing with physical health?