

UN Human Rights Council 42 – Interactive Dialogue with the UN High Commissioner on Cambodia

The United Kingdom thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report.

The UK is deeply concerned at the human rights situation in Cambodia. We share the Special Rapporteur's concerns about the severe regression of political rights and freedoms marked by the continued lack of a credible opposition following the dissolution of the Cambodia National Rescue Party in 2017 and the ban on the majority of CNRP officials from political activity. We urge the Government to enable credible multi-party democracy and free debate.

We urge the Government to ensure that opposition and civil society voices are heard and given a meaningful role in policy making. The transfer of former opposition leader Kem Sokha to his family home was a move in the right direction, but he still remains in detention. We urge the Government to drop all charges against him, and to take the necessary further steps to ensure the widening of political participation.

We echo the Special Rapporteur's recommendations that the political culture should focus on issues rather than persons, and regarding the need for stronger judicial protection of the freedoms of assembly and expression. We urge the government to explore ways in which the international community can support the implementation of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations.

Mr President,

Whilst we acknowledge the small steps taken by the Cambodian Government since the 2018 election, we would welcome the Special Rapporteur's views on what further steps she believes the government is willing to take to ensure greater, and fairer, political participation in Cambodia.