

UN Human Rights Council 42: Statement for the Universal Periodic Review on Brunei Darussalam

The United Kingdom is grateful for Brunei Darussalam's continued willingness to discuss human rights issues. We welcome Brunei's acceptance of our recommendation to strengthen measures to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for modern slavery offences, and ensure adequate victim protection and care.

Regarding the introduction of the Sharia Penal Code, the UK appreciates assurances provided by His Majesty The Sultan on 5 May 2019. Brunei's partial acceptance of our recommendation to ratify the UN Convention Against Torture without reservations is a welcome step and we commend the acceptance of many other similar recommendations. The UK is ready to assist Brunei as it prepares to ratify the Convention.

We welcome His Majesty's commitment to respect individual privacy. We urge Brunei to formalise this commitment for all, including for LGBT people, and ensure that Brunei's laws do not discriminate on these grounds. We also note His Majesty's assurances regarding the application of the current defacto moratorium on the death penalty to the Sharia Penal Code, and urge Brunei to conduct further work to reform its statutory punishments.

The UK acknowledges the delegation's description of Brunei as 'a peaceful country where the people live in harmony regardless of race, gender or religion' (Para 116 of UPR Report). In this spirit, we reiterate our call for Brunei to repeal legislation imposing a State of Emergency and associated restrictions, including those on the media.