

UN Human Rights Council 43: Interactive Dialogue on the Democratic Republic of Congo

Thank you Mr. Vice President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the oral update provided by the High Commissioner and the International Expert team.

We welcome the High Commissioner's visit to DRC in January and the focus on inter-ethnic human rights violations within Ituri. We urge DRC's Government to continue its efforts to end violence, tackle impunity and address corruption.

While we are encouraged by the Government's commitment to work with the international community, the UK remains concerned by DRC's human rights situation. In particular, reports of increased abuses by armed groups in conflict-affected areas, noting the recent escalation of violence in Ituri. We are also concerned that COVID-19 risks undermining progress made by the DRC government on addressing human rights. The Joint Office for Human Rights has reported incidents of state agents violating human rights while implementing measures to address the pandemic. In addition, the poor conditions in prisons across DRC are leaving detainees in desperate need, and risk prisons becoming hubs for transmission.

Madam, High Commissioner,

We would welcome an update on how the Government is strengthening local human rights mechanisms, their capacity to investigate violence such as the events in Yumbi in December 2018, and the implementation of the Universal Periodic Review recommendations made in May 2019.

Thank you.