

UN Human Rights Council 43: Interactive Dialogue on Ukraine

Thank you Mr Vice-President,

The UK thanks the High Commissioner for her update and welcomes the 29th report of the OHCHR Monitoring Mission.

We are concerned by increased civilian casualties in eastern Ukraine. Russia-backed armed formations continue to disregard fundamental freedoms and restrict the work of OHCHR. Reports of systematic use of torture on detainees in non-government controlled areas are deeply troubling. Russia-backed proxies use Covid-19 as a pretext to impose further restrictions on international organisations.

Russia's persistent restriction of fundamental freedoms in illegally annexed Crimea is deplorable. The systematic persecution of Crimean Tatars, suppression of freedom of religion or belief and forced conscription must stop.

Russia's continued arbitrary arrests, detentions and crackdown on freedom of expression are aimed at intimidating the people of Crimea. At least 94 Ukrainian political prisoners remain unlawfully detained in Crimea and Russia – there are accounts of their torture, ill treatment and denial of medical care. We call on Russia to release all political prisoners immediately.

We are concerned by continuing restrictions on OHCHR access to eastern Ukraine and Crimea, and would welcome more reporting on the human rights situation there.

Madam Deputy,

What more can the international community do to ensure accountability for these human rights violations and abuses?

Thank you.