

UN Human Rights Council 43: UK statement for the Interactive Dialogue with the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan

Thank you Madam President,

The United Kingdom thanks the Commission for its important work and detailed report and welcomes South Sudan's cooperation with the Commission on this critical agenda.

We note with concern the rise in deaths linked to localised conflict and displacement at the sub-national level, continued forced recruitment by Government and opposition forces, and ongoing sexual and gender-based violence.

We welcome the formation of the transitional government. Movement into the next phase of peace provides an opportunity to progress human rights. The Commission's work and the mandate renewal is vital to address impunity for violations and abuses and is essential to maintaining progress during transition.

We urge the Government of South Sudan to engage fully with this Council, and other mechanisms, to ensure the progress made in the peace process delivers change. This means open and honest dialogue with organisations and individuals that support human rights inside and outside South Sudan.

The Government of South Sudan has made some positive progress. Further action is now needed to deliver sustainable peace, justice and accountability. That starts with an honest assessment of the challenges faced. In this regard, we seek consensus support for mandate renewal of the Commission.

We would like to ask the Commission what specific action the new Unity Government could immediately take to end restrictions on civic space and protect freedom of expression?

Thank you.