

UN Human Rights Council 46: Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders

Thank you, Madam President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report.

Human Rights Defenders play an essential role in promoting the rights of their fellow citizens and make a huge contribution to furthering the development of their countries.

The UK agrees that there is, no more direct an attack on civil society space than the killing of Human Rights Defenders.

We all need to play a role in protecting Human Rights Defenders, both in our own countries and globally, so they can continue to speak out without fear of being attacked or killed.

In July 2019, the UK published 'UK support for Human Rights Defenders' in all six UN languages.

That document sets out the importance of human rights defenders to the UK and what the UK government can and will do to support them.

We will continue to support Human Rights Defenders through our bilateral engagement around the world, and through multilateral organisations.

Our diplomatic network will continue monitoring cases, observing trials, and raising issues with other governments.

Special Rapporteur, what are the most important steps we as States must take to ensure the safety and the freedom of Human Rights Defenders to speak out?