

# UN Human Rights Council 47: Explanation of position on the resolution on racial justice and equality

The UK thanks the delegation of South Africa for presenting draft Human Rights Council resolution L.8.

The British Government will continue to condemn racism in all its forms. We work domestically to create a fairer society in which all people, regardless of ethnic origin or background, are valued and can reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that one of the most effective ways to tackle disparities and advocate for respect among different racial and ethnic groups is to encourage countries to uphold their human rights obligations. The United Kingdom is strongly committed to tackling the global scourge of racism, including through important instruments such as the International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The UK actively supports the majority of what is contained in this resolution, and the need for international action to address racism.

However, we do not support recent proposals on this agenda, including some priorities set out in the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' report, and her proposal for an "Agenda towards Transformative Change for Racial Justice and Equality". The proposals for reparations for colonialism and slavery divert focus from the pressing challenges of tackling contemporary racism. Contemporary racism is a global challenge affecting all regions.

Likewise, given the large number of mechanisms which already exist in the UN to look at the issues raised by this draft resolution, we do not see the need to create yet another Expert Mechanism as set out in Operative Paragraph 10. Instead we should focus our efforts on implementing existing norms and treaties, rather than creating new reporting mechanisms.

Nonetheless, with these concerns set out for the record, the United Kingdom will join consensus on the text.

We believe that the most effective way for the UK today to respond to the cruelty of the past is to ensure that current and future generations do not forget what happened, and to address modern day slavery.

Whatever our views of the High Commissioner's report and of this resolution, we will remain resolute in our commitment towards the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.