

UN Human Rights Council 48: UK statement for the Item 4 General Debate

Thank you, Madam President,

Let me start with China. We remain seriously concerned about systematic human rights violations in Xinjiang. The evidence is compelling and far-reaching. UN experts must have immediate and unfettered access to Xinjiang. We share the High Commissioner's regret that she has not been granted access to date and we welcome her plans for an assessment of the available information later this year.

We condemn the military coup in Myanmar, and we call on the military junta to return power to the democratically elected government, and end its serious human rights violations.

The human rights picture in South Sudan remains deeply worrying, particularly given government attempts to stifle peaceful protest. The Commission on Human Rights remains a necessary mandate.

Russia must uphold the human rights of all, including the right to freedom of expression and the right to free elections. Russian authorities' measures to marginalise civil society, silence independent media, and prevent independent opposition candidates from participating in the State Duma elections undermine political plurality and disregard Russia's international commitments.

Syrians continue to suffer horrific human rights violations and risk being killed by the regime and its allies. There must be accountability for victims and perpetrators must face justice. We thank the OHCHR for its important reporting on civilian casualties.

The stark increase in executions in Egypt is alarming. We call on Egypt to cease use of the death penalty, and we are deeply concerned by terrorism charges against journalists and activists, and by asset freezes and travel bans on human rights defenders.

We welcome steps by the Government of Burundi that demonstrate greater commitment to human rights. International monitoring of the situation should continue. We call on Burundi to cooperate with all UN human rights mechanisms.

Finally, the UK has raised its concerns about Afghanistan, Tigray, Venezuela and Belarus in other statements.

Thank you.