

# UN Human Rights Council 48: UK statement on the resolution to establish a Climate Change Special Rapporteur

Thank you Madam President.

We thank the core group presenting resolution L.27 for the positive and constructive approach they have taken toward negotiations on this pertinent issue.

The UK recognises the serious and unequivocal threat that climate change poses to our planet, and that it can have implications for the full enjoyment of human rights.

As incoming COP26 President – which our Prime Minister noted recently is a turning point for humanity – the UK remains firm that States should fully respect, protect and promote human rights in all climate change-related actions. The UK is clear that climate change can pose a risk to the lives and wellbeing of individuals and communities across the world. This includes its potential to disproportionately affect those in marginalised and vulnerable situations, including women and girls, those living in poverty, and indigenous peoples.

We recognise the seriousness of this issue. We believe that a new Special Rapporteur will help elevate the work of this Council on addressing the impact of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights. We have a strong record on addressing the linkages between human rights and climate change. We supported the first UN resolution on human rights and climate change in 2008. In 2015 we signed the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action. We are committed to implementing the Gender Action Plan agreed at COP25. We will continue to make the link between human rights and climate change where appropriate, and we will continue to call on states to fulfil their human rights obligations whilst taking action to combat climate change.

Madam President, Our position during the negotiation of the resolution has been to ensure that the proposed mandate avoids duplicating the work of existing Special Rapporteurs and to ensure that it is focused on human rights. The UK has also emphasised that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, while relevant to climate change commitments, do not apply to human rights obligations.

We thank the Core Group for their constructive approach in incorporating our concerns and working across States to reach a robust text. As co-sponsors of this resolution, we welcome the mandate for a new Special Rapporteur and look forward to success in Glasgow in a few weeks time.

Thank you.