

UN Human Rights Council 50: UK Statement during Interactive Dialogue on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association

World news story

The UK delivered a statement during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association.



UK Government

Thank you, Mr President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report. We agree that access to funding, including across borders, is crucial to creating an enabling environment in which civil society can thrive. We are deeply concerned that the trend for funding restrictions continues to escalate.

The ability of civil society to share ideas, elevate concerns and mobilise resources is crucial to its effectiveness and – as we have seen during the Covid 19 pandemic and more recently in Ukraine – to the resilience of society in times of crisis.

Too often, security concerns are used inappropriately as cover to restrict civil society. While states have a duty to protect their citizens, it is not credible to imply that foreign funding to civil society is innately threatening, or that those receiving it are any less legitimate.

The UK works closely with our international partners to promote freedoms of peaceful assembly and of association.

Special Rapporteur,

What steps can be taken to promote a more proportionate, risk based approach to the regulation of civil society and its funding?

Thank you.

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