[Veto initiative adopted by the UN General Assembly](#)

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

The founding members of the United Nations vowed to save generations that followed them from the scourge of war.

They conferred the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on the Security Council.

The UN Charter, in giving that solemn duty, gives the permanent members the power of veto. This is a heavy responsibility, to be used in the interests of securing the peace and security that people around the world seek, and the UN was established to provide.

It is not to be used lightly. And should not, we believe, be used without accountability. It should not prevent the Council from fulfilling its mandate — which is why we have supported this resolution today.

Russia used its veto 17 times since 2011 to block the Council's efforts to protect the Syrian people. Russia used its veto to prevent the Council from taking action in response to their illegal and unprovoked war in Ukraine. Russia has done this in isolation from other Council members, reflecting the lack of international support.

Therefore, the United Kingdom welcomes the call for Member States, who hold a permanent seat on the Security Council, to explain their use of veto to the General Assembly.

For our part, the United Kingdom has not exercised our veto since 1989. We listen carefully and negotiate on the Security Council to try and find agreement.

We prefer to win votes rather than use our veto to block Council action. The UK is a signatory to the Accountability, Coherency and Transparency Group Code of Conduct, where we have pledged not to vote against any credible draft resolution intended to prevent or halt mass atrocities.

By adopting this resolution today we take a step in pursuit of upholding international peace and security, which is what the UN is here to do.

And I thank you Mr President.