

We urge Iran to continue to implement its commitments under the JCPOA

Thank you very much Mr President and thank you very much to our briefers this morning. Mr President, the United Kingdom welcomes the Secretary General's seventh report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 of 2015. We offer our thanks to the Secretariat for their continued professionalism and the support they provide to the Secretary General in producing a thorough and well-evidenced report.

Mr President when I last addressed the Council in this format in December, I explained that the policy of the United Kingdom towards Iran was motivated by three objectives. The first, and most critical, was to uphold the global non-proliferation regime and prevent Iran achieving a nuclear capability that would threaten the Middle East and Europe beyond it.

The United Kingdom participated in negotiations on, and we remain committed to, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We believe is the best way to prevent the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran. The JCPOA is an essential part of the global non-proliferation architecture and it is critical for our national security and for the shared security of our partners and allies.

We therefore once again express our regret at the US decision to leave the JCPOA, to re-impose sanctions on Iran, and not to renew fully waivers for nuclear non-proliferation projects in the framework of the Plan. These actions are contrary to the goals set out in the Plan and in resolution 2231. We continue to work hard to operationalise INSTEX to ensure that legitimate business with Iran can continue. We have also participated in core projects within the deal, including taking on the role of co-chair of the Arak Modernisation Project.

Mr President, so long as Iran remains in full compliance, the UK will do everything we can to support the deal. We are working extremely hard with E3 partners on INSTEX. We welcome the latest International Atomic Energy Agency reports of February and May and the Secretary-General's report, which confirm that Iran continues to uphold its commitments under the JCPOA as we heard from our briefers this morning. But Mr President we are deeply concerned that this meeting takes place just as Iran threatens to cease performing its commitments under the JCPOA by exceeding its low-enriched uranium stockpile limit. If Iran does go over these limits, the non-proliferation benefits of the deal will be eroded. I therefore urge Iran not to undertake activity which will go beyond the limits specified in the JCPOA and to continue to implement its commitments in full.

The second UK objective Mr President, that I shared with the Council in December was the necessity to constrain Iran's actions, which threaten the stability of the region. I made clear that, while SCR 2231 was an endorsement of the JCPOA, it was understood by all in this Council at the time of

adoption that it was designed not just to address nuclear issues, but to continue to impose binding restrictions to curb Iran's ballistic missile and proliferation activity, which as I said earlier, threaten the region and beyond.

Mr President, as we also heard this morning, Iran continues to conduct ballistic missile activity that is inconsistent with SCR 2231. Iran has denied that these activities are inconsistent with 2231 because it claims it does not intend to put a nuclear weapon on these missiles. As the Secretary-General's report notes, the UK, France and Germany have set out clearly in letters to this Council how these missiles are designed to be capable of delivering a nuclear payload. To be clear, 'designed to be capable' means having the capabilities by virtue of technical design. The stated intent is irrelevant.

As our letters set out, we use MTCR Category 1 to make our assessment of nuclear deliverability. The technical specifications under MTCR Category 1 constitute the only widely internationally accepted definition of nuclear deliverability. In addition to the 35 states participating in the MTCR, these criteria have also been widely adopted amongst non-MTCR Governments with respect to implementing obligations under Security Council resolution 1540. It is therefore the most objective criteria available to assess consistency with Security Council resolution 2231.

And just to quote from the criteria Mr President; In the context of resolution 2231, and consistent with the MTCR criteria, 'designed to be capable of delivering a nuclear weapon' means "capable of carrying a payload of 500 kg or more over a range of 300 km or more".

Iran has also Mr President transferred missiles to a number of armed groups, in violation of several Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2231, 2216 and 1540. The latest report from the Secretary-General contains concerning information regarding the firing of a surface-to-surface missile in January from the area of Damascus towards the Golan Heights and the transfer of technical know-how for UAV production to Iraq, in violation of arms transfer restrictions. It also mentions the attack on Abha airport on 12 June, although the type of projectile used in the attack has yet to be determined.

The United Kingdom considers the transfer of such weapons to be in contravention of Security Council resolutions 2231 and 2216. There is firm international consensus that such proliferation of missile technology to non-state actors is destabilising for the region and it escalates already high tensions. Mr President we call on these activities to stop.

The actions are part of a pattern of Iranian behaviour that poses a serious danger to peace and stability in the region. On Monday, I told the Council in closed consultations that, following our own assessment of a range of evidence, the United Kingdom concluded that it was almost certain that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps carried out attacks on two tankers on 13 June. We are also confident that Iran bore responsibility for the 12 May attack on four oil tankers near the port of Fujairah.

Mr President, there can be no justification for attacks on maritime traffic that contravene international rules on freedom of navigation and maritime transport and that further threaten peace and security in the region. Current tensions and instability serve no one. As the Secretary-General has made clear, the world cannot afford a conflict in this region. And therefore Mr President I want to therefore once again call for de-escalation, for dialogue, and for full respect for international rules.

Mr President, the final objective I set out in December was the hope that Iran could normalise its economic and diplomatic relations with the region and beyond and assume its rightful role as a prosperous, responsible power constructively engaged. We still believe that this is possible.

And United Kingdom will continue to play our full part alongside international partners to find diplomatic solutions to reduce the current tensions and to uphold the landmark JCPOA nuclear agreement. And I urge Iran to join us and do the same.