

UK Statement for Agenda Item 4: Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burma, Tomás Ojea Quintana.

Madam President,

We thank Mr Quintana for his continued commitment and his comprehensive report. We welcome the access he has been granted by the Government.

The Government has made remarkable progress, and its efforts to address human rights problems are welcome, but many serious issues remain.

We share concerns about the ongoing ethnic conflict, and the role of the military in serious human rights violations. We agree there is insufficient humanitarian relief to conflict areas and call on all sides to ensure humanitarian supplies reach civilian populations. It is essential for wider national reconciliation that efforts to find a political resolution to the ongoing conflict are accelerated.

We welcome the new National Human Rights Commission. However, we agree questions remain about its compliance with the Paris Principles.

As Mr Quintana notes, it is important that the Government establishes truth, justice and accountability measures for human rights violations, including an end to impunity. We would like to ask Mr Quintana:

- How can the international community assess how free, fair and transparent the upcoming by-elections are in the absence of international observers?
- Rule of law is a significant area of weakness, why do you think that there appears to be a lack of willingness to address previous recommendations on an independent, impartial and effective judiciary?
- Whilst welcoming steps taken to improve human rights, we would appreciate your views on how to help the Government ensure it implements promised measures, particularly on forced labour and child soldiers?

Thank you Madam President.