

Debate Pack

19 January 2024

CDP-0011 (2024)

By Philip Loft (subject
specialist),
Tim Robinson (compiler)

UK response to international human rights abuses

1	Summary	2
2	Background	2
3	Government statements on Gov.uk	7
4	Press and media articles	8
5	PQs	11

1 Summary

A Westminster Hall debate on the UK response to international human rights abuses is scheduled for Wednesday 24 January 2024, from 2.30 to 4.00pm. The debate will be led by Sarah Owen MP.

This debate pack briefing provides an overview of the UK's diplomatic, aid and sanctions response to human rights abuses.

2 Background

2.1 UK prioritisation of human rights

Integrated review of 2021 and refresh of 2023

The [Government's 2021 Integrated Review of defence, security, development and foreign policy](#) said the UK would “increase [its] efforts to protect open society and democratic values where these are being undermined”. The Government said it would uphold human rights by:

1. Using its independent (“Magnitsky style”) sanctions to “hold to account those involved in serious human rights abuses” (see the below section on the UK sanctions regime).
2. Supporting open societies by strengthening effective governance and justice reform.
3. Developing common agendas with other countries, such as those in [the G7](#), and civil society groups.
4. Focusing efforts on the wider European neighbourhood, East Africa, and the Indo-Pacific, and “tailoring [its] approach to meet local needs” to defend human rights and promote gender equality.
5. Working through international bodies such as the UN and the Council of Europe.

2.2 Government human rights and democracy report

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) publishes [annual reports on Democracy and human rights](#). This report assesses the

situation in 32 “human rights priority countries”, including Columbia, Mali, Myanmar, South Sudan, and Yemen. In its most recent report, covering 2022, the Government said:

Too many repressive governments have chosen to disregard their international commitments, and rule through discrimination, persecution and violence.

The below provides a summary of the UK Government assessment for 2022 in four situations, all of which are listed as “human rights priority countries”.

The Commons Library research briefing, [The Commonwealth and human rights](#), March 2023, also provides information human rights in the Commonwealth and the UK and Commonwealth response.

Annual reports on human rights on specific countries are also published by [Human Rights Watch](#), [Amnesty International](#) and the [US State Department](#).

Afghanistan

The Government said [human rights “deteriorated” in 2022](#), with the rights of women and girls particularly damaged by Taliban rule (see Commons Library debate briefing, [Support for Afghan women and girls](#), May 2023, for background). In response, the UK Government said it has:

1. [Raised women’s rights at the UN Security Council](#) and other UN bodies.
2. [Met with Afghan women](#), journalists, and representatives from minority groups to hear their concerns.
3. Together with the G7, issued statements calling for the Taliban to reverse their decision to [ban women from aid work](#) and [other increasing restrictions](#).
4. Committed for 50% of its bilateral aid to reach women and girls in the country (the Government says [it is “on track” to achieve this](#) in 2022/23).

Bangladesh

In 2022, the Government said [the human rights situation “remain\[ed\] a serious concern”](#), with restrictions against human rights defenders and political opposition. It also said there were “restrictions on Rohingya livelihoods, movement, and education”, though some “positive developments” in Bangladesh included a reduction in extra-judicial killings and abductions. The UK Government has also [introduced sanctions against the members of the Myanmar Armed Forces](#), which it says were engaged in “ethnic cleansing” against that Rohingya in neighbouring Myanmar.

Parliamentary elections took place in Bangladesh on 7 January 2024. The FCDO [released a statement after conclusion of the elections stating](#) that they were “concerned at the significant number of arrests of opposition party

members before polling day” and condemned “the acts of intimidation and violence that took place prior to and during the campaign period”.

The Commons Library debate briefing, [Support for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh](#), April 2023, provides more on support for Rohingya refugees.

China

The Government said [there continued to be “widespread restrictions and violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms” in China](#) in 2022. This included “systematic human rights violations in Xinjiang”. In its [2023 refresh of the 2021 Integrated Review](#), the Government also argued that China is “challenging the centrality of human rights and freedoms in the UN system”.

The UK Government says the former Foreign Secretary, James Cleverly, [raised violations in Xinjiang directly with the Chinese Government](#) when he visited Beijing in 2023. The Government has also raised “grave concerns” about violations in Xinjiang [at the UN](#), and [imposed asset freezes and travel bans on those involved](#) under the UK Global Human Rights sanctions regime.

The Lords Library briefing, [China: Allegations of human rights abuses](#), November 2022 and Commons Library debate briefings, [The Uygur tribunal](#), January 2022 and [Persecution of Buddhists in Tibet](#), December 2023, provide background on reports of human rights abuses in China.

Occupied Palestinian Territories

In 2022, [the Government said](#) violations by the Government of Israel in the context “of Israel’s occupation” of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem “intensified”, while Hamas, when in control of the entirety of Gaza, also committed “increase[ing] human rights abuses”. It also said the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank “continued to breach fundamental freedoms”.

In 2022 and 2023, the UK Government [called on the Israeli Government to halt its settlement expansion](#) and to take steps against settler violence, while in 2022 it [called upon the Palestinian Authority to establish a national preventive mechanism against torture](#).

The Commons Library debate pack, [Human rights protection for Palestinians](#), April 2023, provides further information on the situation. The Commons Library research briefing, [2023/24 Israel-Hamas conflict: UK and international response](#), January 2024, includes UK Government statements on international humanitarian law during the Israel-Hamas conflict.

2.3

UK human rights sanctions regime

The UK's global human rights sanctions regime is provided for in the [Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020](#), in force since July 2020. The Government [says the sanctions regime](#) is intended to deter, and provide accountability for, activities which, if carried out by or on behalf of a state, would amount to a serious violation of certain human rights by that state.

The regulations provide for sanctions to be adopted in response to actions that would usually (if carried out by or on behalf of a state) amount to a serious violation of the following three human rights:

1. The right to life.
2. The right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
3. The right to be free from slavery, not to be held in servitude or required to perform forced or compulsory labour, whether or not the activity is carried out by or on behalf of a State.

Persons undertaking or involved in these activities can be designated for the purpose of a travel ban or an asset freeze.

The Office for Financial Sanctions publishes [a list of designated targets](#) under the global human rights sanctions regime. This was last updated on 8 December 2023, and includes sanctions against 96 individuals and 11 organisations.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 2023, [the UK announced sanctions in coordination with the United States and Canada](#) against those involved in forced labour operations in southeast Asia and government-linked officials in Belarus, Haiti, Iran and Syria complicit in repressing individual freedoms.

The UK [also manages separate sanctions regimes](#) against individual states, including Afghanistan, Iran and Myanmar. In December, [a new sanctions against Iran came into force](#). One of its grounds on which the UK can sanction individuals or entities is “the Iranian regime’s undermining of democracy, respect for the rule of law and good governance”.

2.4

UK aid programmes

The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) [published a review of UK aid to support democracy and human rights](#) in 2023, on which around £1.4 billion was spent from 2016 to 2021. Aid and development programmes

examined included the work of the [Westminster Foundation for Democracy](#), [Magna Carta Fund](#) and the [Open Government Partnership](#).

The [ICAI rated UK aid spending on democracy and human rights as Green/Amber](#) (the second highest possible rating) and found it was able to produce useful results and prioritised many excluded groups:

We identified examples of good delivery, with successful programmes building effective coalitions, working on locally salient issues and operating with longer timeframes. They provided effective support for women, youth, and people with disabilities, but less consistently for minorities, LGBT+ people, journalists and human rights defenders. There were also good results from support for elections, parliaments, political parties, media, transparency and human rights.

However, [the ICAI report rated the “coherence” of the UK’s aid efforts as Amber/Red](#) (the second lowest possible rating). It argued that the FCDO has a “declining reputation” in being a “thought leader and reliable global actor” on democracy and human rights. The ICAI argued this was the result of the loss of expertise due to the merger of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with the Department for International Development in 2020 and that “high policy ambition [was] not matched by sufficient or predictable budgets” (democracy and human rights expenditure fell by 33% in 2020, from £220 million to £148 million).

The Government [welcomed the ICAI report](#) and said it was developing a new strategy on open societies, democracy and political rights and would implement reforms to use expertise more effectively.

3

Government statements on Gov.uk

[75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\) commemoration event: UK pledge announcement](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

18 December 2023

Statement delivered by the UK's Permanent Representative to the WTO and UN, Simon Manley, at the UDHR commemoration event in Geneva.

[Human Rights Day 2023 and 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Foreign Secretary's speech](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

11 December 2023

The Foreign Secretary gave a statement by video at a Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) event ahead of Human Rights Day 2023.

[Human Rights Day 2023 and 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: summary of Lord Ahmad's speech](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

11 December 2023

Lord Ahmad gave a statement at a Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) stakeholder event ahead of Human Rights Day 2023.

[UK and allies sanction human rights abusers](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Home Office

8 December 2023

UK and allies have sanctioned human rights abusers 75 years after Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

[Human Rights and Democracy Reports](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Updated 13 July 2023

Reports on the activities of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to promote human rights abroad.

4 Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

4.1 Afghanistan

[Why tracking human rights abuses in Afghanistan is becoming harder](#)

The New Humanitarian

Ali M. Latifi

20 July 2023

[The world must unite now to halt the Taliban's repression of Afghan women and girls](#)

The Guardian

Gordon Brown

8 August 2023

4.2 Bangladesh

[Universal Periodic Review: What the United Kingdom has recommended to Bangladesh](#)

The Business Standard (Bangladesh)

13 November 2023

[Rishi Sunak faces backlash over image showing him kneeling in front of Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina](#)

Mail Online

Elena Salvoni

10 September 2023

[Bangladesh: violent autocratic crackdown ahead of elections](#)

Human Rights Watch

26 November 2023

4.3 China and the Uyghurs

[China: Anniversary of UN's damning Xinjiang report must be "wake-up" call to action](#)

Amnesty International
31 August 2023

[Britain has done more than ignore the Uyghur genocide – from politics to business, it is complicit](#)

The Guardian
Rahima Mahmut
31 August 2023

4.4 Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories

[UK politicians 'failing to hold Israel to account' on human rights](#)

The National
Abbi Garton-Crosbie
22 October 2022

[After visiting Israel and Ramallah, the International Criminal Court Prosecutor says he will intensify investigations](#)

Associated Press
3 December 2023

4.5 India

[When India Was a Human Rights Leader](#)

Time Magazine
Ritumbra Manuvie and Alena Kahle
9 December 2023

[Rishi Sunak refuses to confront Indian PM Narendra Modi on human rights as he pushes for trade deal](#)

i News
Arj Singh and Hugo Gye
8 September 2023

4.6

Nigeria

[Africans applaud British Lord's push on Christian 'genocide' in Nigeria](#)

Crux

Ngala Killian Chimtom

19 December 2023

[Nigeria... The making of a human rights abuse haven](#)

The Guardian (Nigeria)

Eno-Abasi Sunday

22 December 2023

5

PQs

5.1

Afghanistan

[Afghanistan: Taliban](#)

19 Dec 2023 | 6857

Asked by: Catherine West

To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, what steps he is taking to use official engagement with the Taliban to engage with the Afghan people.

Answering member: Leo Docherty | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

FCDO officials regularly meet Taliban representatives to support HMG objectives on Afghanistan. This includes pressing on human rights, including the rights of women and girls and minorities. We are clear that Afghanistan needs more inclusive governance that is representative of its citizens. We have therefore encouraged the Taliban to engage with a diverse range of Afghans, particularly women and civil society representatives, and listen to their views. Ministers and officials also engage with other Afghans, based in the UK and elsewhere, including human rights activists and non-Taliban political figures.

[Afghanistan: Women's Rights](#)

19 Sep 2023 | 198894

Asked by: Dan Carden

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support grassroots women-led organisations in Afghanistan to protect the rights of women and girls.

Answering member: Leo Docherty | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government condemns the restrictions the Taliban have imposed on Afghan women and girls. Without the full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, Afghanistan will not achieve sustainable economic and political development. Ministers and officials engage regularly with Afghan women from civil society organisations. Through our Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, we help civil society groups monitor human rights, raise awareness and promote women's inclusion in dialogue initiatives.

Afghanistan: Hazara

14 Sep 2023 | 198397

Asked by: Rachael Maskell

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the situation of the Hazara community in Afghanistan.

Answering member: Leo Docherty | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

FCDO officials regularly press the Taliban to protect religious and ethnic minorities, including the Hazara community. We are working with international partners to ensure credible monitoring. In October, we co-sponsored a Human Rights Council resolution to extend the UN Special Rapporteur's mandate. His February report included an assessment of the violence and threats against religious minorities and the situation for Hazara communities. Ministers and officials engage regularly with a range of Afghans, including Hazaras, to ensure our policy and programming reflect the diversity of needs in Afghanistan. In May, officials met a representative from the Hazara National Congress.

5.2

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Human Rights

18 Jan 2024 | 9055

Asked by: Dan Carden

To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, what recent assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Bangladesh.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Bangladesh is a Human Rights Priority Country for the UK. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad, Minister for South Asia, raised human rights with Prime Minister Hasina when they met in October. Our statement following the recent election in Bangladesh reiterated our position on human rights and the rule of law, which are essential elements of the democratic process. We regularly engage with the Government of Bangladesh on the treatment of those in detention and on the integrity and independence of the judicial process. We will continue to work with the Government of Bangladesh to address human rights concerns, and will support efforts towards a stable, prosperous, and democratic Bangladesh.

Bangladesh: Civil Society and Human Rights

04 Dec 2023 | HL414

Asked by: Lord Jackson of Peterborough

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support (1) human rights, and (2) civil society in Bangladesh.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK is concerned by the recent conviction of human rights activists and the shrinking of civil society space in Bangladesh. Bangladesh remains a UK Human Rights Priority Country. The UK regularly raises with the Government of Bangladesh, both in public and private, the importance of respect for human rights and the rule of law. In October, I met Prime Minister Hasina and raised the arrests of human rights defenders in Bangladesh. We press the Government of Bangladesh to end harassment and intimidation of civil society, the media and political opposition, including the Bangladesh National Party.

5.3

China and the Uyghurs

China: Muslims

28 Nov 2023 | 3525

Asked by: Catherine West

To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, what representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on the rights of the Muslim population of that country.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government closely monitors China's serious human rights violations in Xinjiang against Uyghurs and members of other Muslim minorities, and continues to lead international efforts to hold China to account and change its behaviour.

In October 2023, the UK led a record joint statement on Xinjiang at the UN, demonstrating a significant number of countries are prepared to call China out for its human rights violations. We have also imposed sanctions, provided guidance to businesses, and taken action to tackle forced labour in supply chains.

We consistently raise China's human rights violations with the Chinese authorities at the highest levels. The former Foreign Secretary did so during

his visit to Beijing in August 2023. We will continue to raise these issues directly with China and in multilateral fora including the UN.

China

26 Oct 2023 | HL10606

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) China's compliance with the Sino-British Joint Declaration, in particular any infringement on the autonomy of Hong Kong, (2) the treatment of the Uyghurs in China and whether this amounts to genocide, (3) the sanctioning of UK parliamentarians by China, and (4) allegations of intelligence operatives placed by the government of China in the UK Parliament; and whether they have considered any such assessment before deciding on a resumption of JETCO talks.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

China remains in an ongoing state of non-compliance with the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Hong Kong has retained some economic autonomy however actions by the Hong Kong and Chinese authorities, including the imposition of the National Security Law, continue to erode civil and political rights.

On 18 October, the UK led a UN Third Committee joint statement on behalf of 51 countries, urging China to end its human rights violations in Xinjiang. Any judgement as to whether genocide has occurred is a matter for judicial decision.

On espionage allegations, it would be inappropriate to comment on the Metropolitan Police's live investigation.

5.4

Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Israel and Palestine

02 May 2023 | 732 cc3-5

Asked by: Tommy Sheppard

Whether he has had recent discussions with his Israeli counterpart on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Our strong bilateral relationship with Israel means that we can speak frankly with the Israelis, and whenever I do so I encourage them to ensure that security operations are carried out proportionately and in accordance with international law. I call on all parties to find opportunities to de-escalate tension. On 7 April, I condemned the indiscriminate rocket attacks directed at Israel, and I also condemned the horrific murder of Lucy, Maia and Rina Dee by a terrorist. My deepest condolences go to Rabbi Leo Dee and his family. The UK remains committed to a two-state solution, and we consistently engage with Israel and the leadership of the Palestinian Authority to support that goal.

[Israel and Palestine](#)

14 Mar 2023 | 729 c675

Asked by: Drew Hendry

In February we welcomed the moratorium on new construction in settlement areas, as the Foreign Secretary has described. As we heard, that was followed by an immediate and blatant breach of trust by the Israeli Prime Minister. The Foreign Secretary says that it is better to raise issues than not, but how does he measure success in raising them, because we see absolutely no evidence of success?

Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

I do not think it is news to anyone in the House that the situation in Israel and the OPTs is complicated and long standing. We are not the only country in the world that raises these important issues, and we can continue to do so because we have a strong working relationship with both the Government of Israel and the leadership of the Palestinian Authority—as I said, I had conversations with both very recently. We will continue to work at what we think is in everyone’s interests: a sustainable two-state solution. We will not be fatalistic about it. We will not give up just because it is difficult. If the hon. Gentleman thinks that we should walk away just because it is a long-standing challenge, that is up to him. We will not abandon the Israelis or the Palestinian people. We will continue working for a sustainable two-state solution.

5.5

India

India: Human Rights and Religious Freedom

08 Dec 2023 | 4557

Asked by: Ruth Jones

To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, whether he has had discussions with his counterparts in Manipur, India on (a) human rights and (b) the right to freedom of religion or belief in the last month.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government is committed to defending human rights and promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). We have a broad and deep partnership with the Government of India and we discuss all elements of our relationship, including human rights and FoRB. During his visit in May, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for South Asia, discussed FoRB with the Government of India, leaders of faith groups and others, and raised the situation in Manipur with the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs.

India: Human Rights

25 Oct 2023 | 200730

Asked by: Claudia Webbe

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking with his international counterparts to help tackle reported human rights abuses in Manipur.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Our diplomatic network in India closely follows reports of violence in the state of Manipur. We remain committed to championing human rights around the world and we work with the UN, OSCE (The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), Council of Europe, G7 and other multilateral fora to promote Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB). The UK Government has a broad and deep partnership with the Government of India and we discuss all elements of our relationship, including issues where we have them. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for South Asia, raised the current situation in Manipur with the Indian Government during his visit to India in May.

India: Violence

18 Oct 2023 | 201039

Asked by: Sir Stephen Timm

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to the Government of India about recent attacks on (a) Christians in Manipur and (b) Muslims and Dalits elsewhere in India.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The British High Commission in New Delhi consistently monitors human rights across India including attacks on religious minorities and others. The UK Government has a broad and deep partnership with the Government of India, and we discuss all elements of our relationship, including human rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), and raise issues where we have them. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for South Asia, raised human rights and the situation in Manipur, with the Indian Government during his visit to India in May. He also met representatives of diverse faith groups.

5.6

Myanmar and the Rohingyas

Myanmar: Rohingya

03 Jan 2024 | HL1209

Asked by: Baroness Goudie

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 11 December, whether they plan to call a meeting at the UN Security Council to discuss Myanmar's non-implementation of the provisional measures set out by the International Court of Justice to protect the Rohingya in *The Gambia v Myanmar*.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We are aware of concerns that Myanmar is not meeting its obligations, under a Provisional Measures Order of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), to protect the Rohingya. We are clear that Myanmar must comply with the Order. In November, we jointly filed a declaration of intervention at the ICJ in *The Gambia's* case alleging Myanmar has perpetrated genocide against the Rohingya, in order to set out our interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Genocide Convention before the Court. We will continue to use our UN Security Council leadership role to maintain a spotlight on Myanmar, including the Rohingya.

Myanmar: Human Rights

16 Oct 2023 | 200096

Asked by: Catherine West

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his international counterparts on the (a) detention of political prisoners and (b) human rights situation in Myanmar.

Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Although the UK has no political engagement with the military regime, the UK regularly raises the human rights situation in Myanmar with international partners and in multilateral fora. We continue to condemn the ongoing human rights violations by the military regime and call for the release of all those arbitrarily detained, including in the landmark United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution, which the UK coordinated in December 2022. The UK reiterated this demand in the G7 Leader's statement in May. The UK has co-sponsored a number of UN Human Rights Council resolutions, including one in April, which condemned the military regime's human rights violations. On 17 October, I (Minister Trevelyan) plan to join and co-convene a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) High Level Meeting on Rohingya Refugees, where I will reiterate UK support for the Rohingya community and the need for sustainable solutions to improve the conditions in Rakhine State.

5.7

Nigeria

Nnamdi Kanu

15 Nov 2023 | 803

Asked by: Jim Shannon

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 18 October 2023 to question 199965 on Nnamdi Kanu, what assessment he has made of the implications for his position on Mr Nnamdi Kanu of Opinion No. 25/2022 of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at its ninety-third session, between 30 March and 8 April 2022, published on 17 August 2022.

Answering member: Mr Andrew Mitchell | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The British Government takes the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's opinion in this case very seriously. Ministers and officials have raised Nnamdi Kanu's case with the Nigerian authorities on multiple occasions. The former

Foreign Secretary last raised his case with the then Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama on 14 March 2023 and the British High Commissioner raised the case with the Nigerian Attorney General and National Security Advisor on 24 and 30 October 2023 respectively. FCDO officials continue to be in regular contact with representatives of Mr Kanu in the United Kingdom and in Nigeria. The Foreign Secretary continues to take the steps he considers most effective regarding our consular assistance to Mr Kanu and keeps these under review.

Nigeria: Human Rights

29 Jun 2023 | 191189

Asked by: Derek Thomas

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recommendations the Government plans to make to the UN Human Rights Council for the Universal Periodic Review into Nigeria (a) overall and (b) on freedom of religion and belief.

Answering member: Mr Andrew Mitchell | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government strongly supports the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process. We are committed to supporting Nigeria to protect human rights and provided recommendations on this during Nigeria's previous UPR in 2018, including on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). We will consider recommendations and advance questions as part of Nigeria's next UPR in early 2024, and once it has submitted its national report in October this year.

Disclaimer

The Commons Library does not intend the information in our research publications and briefings to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. We have published it to support the work of MPs. You should not rely upon it as legal or professional advice, or as a substitute for it. We do not accept any liability whatsoever for any errors, omissions or misstatements contained herein. You should consult a suitably qualified professional if you require specific advice or information. Read our briefing '[Legal help: where to go and how to pay](#)' for further information about sources of legal advice and help. This information is provided subject to the conditions of the Open Parliament Licence.

Sources and subscriptions for MPs and staff

We try to use sources in our research that everyone can access, but sometimes only information that exists behind a paywall or via a subscription is available. We provide access to many online subscriptions to MPs and parliamentary staff, please contact hoclibraryonline@parliament.uk or visit commonslibrary.parliament.uk/resources for more information.

Feedback

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publicly available briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email papers@parliament.uk. Please note that authors are not always able to engage in discussions with members of the public who express opinions about the content of our research, although we will carefully consider and correct any factual errors.

You can read our feedback and complaints policy and our editorial policy at commonslibrary.parliament.uk. If you have general questions about the work of the House of Commons email hcenquiries@parliament.uk.

The House of Commons Library is a research and information service based in the UK Parliament. Our impartial analysis, statistical research and resources help MPs and their staff scrutinise legislation, develop policy, and support constituents.

Our published material is available to everyone on commonslibrary.parliament.uk.

Get our latest research delivered straight to your inbox. Subscribe at commonslibrary.parliament.uk/subscribe or scan the code below:



 commonslibrary.parliament.uk

 [@commonslibrary](https://twitter.com/commonslibrary)