

UN Human Rights Council 41: Democratic Republic of Congo

Thank you, Mr President,

The United Kingdom thanks the team of international experts for their report and appreciates their work in Kasai.

We welcome the continued cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Congo authorities, including allowing the international experts unhindered access.

The UK notes the progress made by the DRC authorities in their efforts to investigate those who have committed serious crimes. However, the UK remains concerned that, as flagged in the report, the focus of these efforts has not been balanced; that their investigation does not reflect the full range of human rights violations and abuses committed; nor does it cover all categories of perpetrators. The UK urges the DRC authorities to increase efforts to bring justice for victims, including by broadening their investigation and prosecution strategy to ensure it adequately reflects the sexual nature and scale of the crimes committed. In addition, we urge the DRC authorities to combat impunity and ensure that no perpetrators of such crimes are exempt from justice, regardless of rank, identity or affiliation.

The UK agrees that reconciliation between the communities of Kasai remains key to preventing further violence and bringing peace to Kasai. The UK notes that DRC authorities have made efforts to foster reconciliation, but more needs to be done to address the root causes of the conflict if the people of Kasai are to reconcile and achieve peace and stability.

We would welcome the Independent Experts' views on how they intend to engage with the new government in order to progress in the areas highlighted as a priority in this report.

Thank you, Mr President.