

UN Human Rights Council 48: UK statement for the interactive dialogue with UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria

Thank you, Madam President,

The UK strongly supports the work of the Commission of Inquiry, and we thank it for its continued reporting. As the Commission has concluded, the human rights situation has worsened for many Syrians over the past year. We condemn all violations and abuses that have taken place. It is however the Syrian regime and its allies that bear the primary responsibility for this devastation, and they must be held accountable.

The UK is deeply concerned about the situation in Dara'a, where over 50,000 civilians have been besieged and under heavy bombardment now for two months. The siege has caused the deaths of civilians, including children, and the forced displacement of thousands more.

It is appalling that civilians are contending with shortages of fuel, cooking gas, water, and bread. The regime is intentionally restricting water and electricity. We urge all parties to ensure immediate and unrestricted humanitarian access to all those in need.

It is clear from the reporting that violence continues across the country and there has been a recent escalation in attacks, which has resulted in needless civilian deaths. The UK calls for urgent de-escalation of all violence.

Commissioners,

The human rights situation across the whole of Syria remains deplorable. To which specific thematic issues do you intend to focus next?