

Delegation from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Position Paper for the United Nations Security Council

Issues affecting international peace and security are as diverse as is the multitude of ways to effectively address them and changing environments urge the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) to find adequate responses. The United Kingdom, as a founding member of the SC, greatly appreciates various topics of recent security issues to be reflected upon during SC meetings helping to find measures for people to securely live and prosper around the globe. Being actively engaged, the United Kingdom looks forward to the debates and meaningful resolutions on the following topics: Strengthening Peacebuilding to Prevent and Mitigate Conflict; The Impact of Climate-Related Disasters on International Peace and Security.

I. Strengthening Peacebuilding to Prevent and Mitigate Conflict

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as of January 2019, some 70 million people had to flee their homes worldwide due to various conflicts. Reconciling such conflicts that have global impacts and hence affect international peace and security is the core mandate of the SC, as outlined in the UN Charter. All too often, however, UN-mandated peacebuilding efforts fall far behind their potential, especially with regard to peacekeeping operations (PKOs). Being most widely associated with UN peacebuilding efforts, PKOs need to keep up with the expectations put into them. However, the goal should be via preventive mediation to not having to deploy PKOs in the first place, that is to say, to put the political process at the core of peacebuilding efforts again.

The United Kingdom has a longstanding tradition in support UN peacekeeping efforts and by now it is one of the largest contributors to both the regular UK budget generally and the peacekeeping budget specifically, also devoting 0.7% of GNI to other development assistance. Endorsing the *Comprehensive Review of PKOs and special political missions* (2015) by the Secretary-General, the United Kingdom considers the political process within a conflict area to be the core of any peacebuilding effort, since policy solutions generate lasting peace. Pursuing a rules-based approach to international relations, close work with fellow permanent member states especially in the SC, but also beyond with strong partnerships, will help achieve this aim. However, sometimes deployment of special PKOs is necessary anyway to establish an environment in which political negotiations can be pursued. In this regard, the United Kingdom continuously engages in training annually some 11,000 UN peacekeepers from around world to ensure our forces meet the standards we stand for and want to be promoted during their missions. Deployment of troops needs well-founded information on mission requirements as well as tailored mandates, which is why the United Kingdom firmly supports the modifications of the peacebuilding architecture as already proposed in the *Brahimi Report* (2000).

In order to prevent and mitigate conflicts effectively, the United Kingdom calls for improvements on all three areas of peacebuilding: planning, pledges, and performance. Information on potential conflicts and development of ongoing ones is incumbent to effectively address and adjust to the given circumstances. Therefore, an information and strategic analysis unit would considerably enhance UN peacebuilding efforts, a priori and meanwhile. Should intervention be deemed necessary by the SC, the United Kingdom recommends specific task forces within the Peacebuilding Commission to be established, which should examine all possible options with a strong emphasis on political solutions and the involvement of women and the youth in finding strategic responses. However, if deployments of troops become necessary, they should be well-trained and be provided with tailored mandates. Thus, the United Kingdom encourages to set up centralised training of blue helmets to ensure troops meet the highest standards and the expectations to their missions.

II. The Impact of Climate-Related Disasters on International Peace and Security

As stated by the Secretary-General of the UN in September last year, climate change is the defining issue of our time and a direct, existential threat. It brings about harmful slow-onset hazards such as sea-level rise, as well as rapid shocks such as storms and floods. The frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters (CRDs) are set to increase further. In many regions, these phenomena are

already harming critical systems, such as water and food security or health, in addition to contributing to displacement around the globe. In the Commonwealth of Nations, 60% of our fellow member states already face such climate-related threats. All these factors undermine human dignity and people's ability to develop and prosper, especially young people.

Alarmed by these dramatic trends, the United Kingdom considered CRDs a threat to international peace and security right from the start, which is why it initiated the first-ever informal debate about this issue in the SC back in 2007. Substantial progress has been made in recognising related dangers since then, however this topic remains as pressing and urgent as ever. Noting with concern that there have already been first withdrawals from the seminal *Paris Agreement* (2015) with concerns over the national economy, the United Kingdom reiterates its commitment to the targets enshrined therein. This becomes apparent in its role as one of the world's leading providers of climate finance, having committed more than \$7.5 billion between 2016 and 2020 in support of both mitigation and adaptation via the United Kingdom International Climate Fund. More than finance, the United Kingdom works together with developing countries in the UK-led Centre for Global Disaster Protection to increase the preparedness and resilience to climate change and CRDs especially there but also beyond. Bilateral cooperation with China to develop a framework to monitor climate related risks continuously, which results were presented in 2018, is another example of engagement on the topic.

In several resolutions, the SC has acknowledged the adverse effects of climate change on the stability in specific regional circumstances calling for better information and appropriate risk managements. However, this risk management approach must become far more systematic and comprehensive. Therefore, the United Kingdom first and foremost urges the SC to adopt a resolution which officially recognises the various threats climate change poses to international peace and security, including inter alia CRDs and how to address them globally in a timely and proper manner. In a next step, information on how CRDs can best be practically addressed on a local level needs to be acquired and shared with the respective specialised agencies within the UN system and other actors beyond. The United Kingdom strongly recommends, in this regard, the recently established UN Climate Security Mechanism to be provided with enhanced capacities to successfully meet the tasks and expectations to its important work. This would most straightforwardly be done by member states sending expert personnel and providing additional funding. Finally, in order to achieve the most comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand, the United Kingdom views especially the inclusion of women and the youth as crucially important to the process of information gathering, and thus encourages to enhance opportunities for these to actively engage on the topic.