

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

The topics before the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are: Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security; Preventing Violence Towards Refugees and IDPs; and Partnerships Between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is looking forward to cooperate closely with the UN Member States (MS) in order to effectively address the issues on the agenda.

I. Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security

Overpopulation in certain areas, resource scarcity, conflicts over limited resources and fragile states, failing because of being overtaxed with these challenges – these scenarios, with reference to the SC Report 64/350 (2009), give the words of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon a tremendous significance: “We must make no mistake. Climate change not only exacerbates threats to peace and security; it is a threat to international peace and security”. As initiator of the debate in the SC 2007, the topic of Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security is an important issue for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Figures of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimate 165.9 million people displaced by sudden-onset natural disasters and in some regions such as Asia, the number even exceeds the number of people displaced by conflict and violence. However, with no reliable estimates available of the number of environmental migrants worldwide of slow-onset disasters, there is no reliable reflection possible on the issue and the alarming lack of monitoring and statistics about environmental migration becomes obvious. The lack of statistics is mainly a cause of a missing legally binding definition of an environmental migrant.

In order to prevent the consequences of environmental migration mentioned above, the UK took measures to scientifically assess root causes for environmental migration in order to create a reliable basis for policy decision-making and to effectively address the root causes of environmental migration. In 2011, the country's government office for science launched the Foresight study on migration and global environmental change, the findings of one of the largest studies about the relation of migration and environmental change. As the United Kingdom (UK) sees the main challenge in combating climate change in order to reduce environmental migration, the country invested 7.7 billion dollars in international climate finance to help countries who suffer the most from the effects of man-made climate change. Moreover, the UK is one of the first countries that administers a national climate change risk assessment. The country worked closely with experts of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Republic of India (RI) and the United States of America (USA) to investigate complex, systemic risks especially the interaction of climate change with security. Furthermore, in cooperation with the PRC, the country developed a framework to monitor climate related risk continuously, published in their cooperation synthesis report on climate change risk assessment in 2018.

In order to affectively address the issue, the UK advises the SC to establish a legally binding definition of environmental migrants in order to create a legal basis for further investigation and to avoid legal loopholes. Therefore, the SC should consider the definition brought forward by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), where “environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment that adversely affects their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad”. In addition, the UK sees the need of a common framework for the consistent and regular monitoring of climate change risks in relation to migration. Therefore, the SC should strive for a harmonized monitoring of the issue of environmental migration and its root causes in every Member State (MS), based on the definition of an environmental migrant. Scientific assessment and monitoring should serve as reliable basis for further decision-making in order to tackle the causes of environmental migration and to prevent concerns for peace and security. The UK is committed to striving for solution to this pressing problem.

II. Preventing Violence Towards Refugees and IDPs

At the end of 2017, an alarming number of 68.5 million people worldwide suffered from forced displacement according to the UN Refugee Agency's (UNHCR) Global Trends study. The UK is especially concerned about and committed in the area of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) that directly affects refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in armed conflict.

This shows inter alia a UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) study in 2017, where nearly half of the migrant women and children in Libya stated being sexual abused and being victim of sexual violence on their journey.

Fully appreciating the efforts already put in the implementation of SC Resolution 2242 (2015) on woman peace and security, the UK took several measures to combat gender-based violence in armed conflict, based on a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. 2012, Lord William Hague, the UK's former foreign secretary, founded in cooperation with Angelina Jolie the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) that trained 17000 Military and Police personnel on sexual violence issues since then. Over 70 projects across the world such as in Syria, Burma and Nigeria have been supported with 40 million pounds by the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) to end sexual violence in conflict. To send a signal of commitment based on shared values to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, the UK signed the voluntary Compact on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CPSEA), brought forward by the Secretary-General.

The UK appreciates the implementation of the SC Resolution 2242 (2015) on Woman Peace and Security and stresses the need to continue working on translating these goals into action especially concerning refugees and IDPs. The UK is clear, that it is the duty of the UN to eradicate SGBV and to demonstrate the highest possible protection standards for female refugees and IDPs. Therefore, the UK proposes the obligatory establishment of training concerned with gender-based and sexual violence issues for peacekeeping or -building troops that operate in armed conflict in every MS, with the aim to raise the gender-sensitivity of the involved groups, to end and to prevent SGBV against female refugees and IDPs through consciousness. Hence, the SC should promote their implementation in all MS and strive for harmonization of the trainings in all MS. The SC should consider the system of the PSVI of the UK, when urging the MS to create training and education initiatives for peacekeeping troops. In addition, the UK would highly appreciate the SC to clearly set and meet commitments on gender equality in peace operation mandates in the spirit of the SC Resolution 1325 (2000).

III. Partnerships Between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations

"We have thus entered an era of "partnership peacekeeping", where close cooperation among multiple multilateral actors throughout every phase of a crisis is becoming the norm – and an essential component of each organization." With the words of the Secretary-General in his report S/2015/229 (2015) the UK expresses its delight about how connected and effective the Trilateral partnership among the UN, the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) in peacekeeping operations has become. However, the SC should be still aware of certain critical points of these current partnerships such as the lack of harmonization of policies in order to improve the trilateral cooperation during peacekeeping operations. Moreover, the focus should not rely on establishing the Trilateral partnership but on integrating other important partnerships such as the the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Fully conscious by the importance of partnerships of the UN with relevant regional organizations in peacekeeping operations, the UK completely supported the SC Resolution 1631 (2005) and Resolution 1809 (2008). In addition, the UK hosted the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London in 2016 in order to outline its commitment for a better coordination during peacekeeping missions. The UK presented its three "Ps": Planning, Pledges and Performance, as guidelines to tackle current issues of peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, the UK underlines its support for the SC Resolutions 1809 (2008), 2033 (2012) and 2167 (2014).

The UK sees the need of an improved coordination and cooperation of the UN with its regional partners during peacekeeping missions. The UK proposes the SC to organize a biannual meeting with the representatives of the regional organizations: the EU, the AU and the ASEAN. The focus during these meetings should rely on the harmonization of policies and standards for peacekeeping missions and a better understanding between the UN and its partners about the concrete meaning of the peacekeeping operation mandate in practice. Moreover, with regard to the Report of the Secretary-General 59/591 (2004), the UK recognizes the need in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding. Recent peacekeeping missions such as Liberia have shown that the peacekeeping operations are able to smooth the way to sustainable peace, when linked to programmes such as disarmament or demobilization. The SC should strive for the establishment of a biannual meeting of the UN with its regional partners in order to work on clear and harmonized concepts to ensure sustainable peace in post-conflict areas.