# UN Human Rights Council 61: UK Statement for the Interactive Dialogue on Syria

**UK Statement for the Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. Delivered by the UK's Permanent Representative to the WTO and UN, Kumar Iyer.**

Thank you Chair,

The UK would like to start by thanking the Commissioners for their work. Fifteen months have passed since the fall of the Assad regime. A regime defined by brutality and systematic abuse. We commend them for their ongoing work to ensure these crimes are neither hidden nor forgotten, giving voice to victims and laying bare the scale of the suffering endured.

This transparency creates the preconditions for healing, stability, peace and the rebuilding of society. That is something I believe every member in this room wants. The UK believes that without your work that will not be possible. It is a necessary but, of course, not sufficient criteria.

In this light, we strongly welcome the government's engagement with the Commission and steps taken to embed human rights in the foundations of the new Syria, including on transitional justice, missing persons and the opening of civic space. Syrian civil society - long the driver of accountability - must be able to operate freely, safely and without fear. The government of Syria's cooperation with the COI is to be strongly commended. We know this is not easy, but we urge it to continue.

However, this period has also been marked by deeply troubling sectarian violence, in the coastal regions and in Suweyda, taking the lives of nearly 3,000 people. National investigations, and those of the Commission, are vital, as are the initiation of judicial processes to hold perpetrators to account. These must now translate into transparency, accountability, security sector reform, and engagement with affected communities.

Thank you.

https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/un-human-rights-council-61-uk-statement-for-the-interactive-dialogue-on-syria