

UN Human Rights Council 61: UK Statement for the Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on Afghanistan

26.2.2026 - Eleanor Sanders | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

UK Statement for the Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on Afghanistan. Delivered by the UK's Human Rights Ambassador, Eleanor Sanders.

Thank you, Mr Vice-President.

Special Rapporteur.

We welcome your continued commitment to highlighting the appalling human rights situation in Afghanistan. The UK fully supports your mandate.

Taliban repression is intensifying. We are dismayed by the new criminal procedures directive which entrenches religious discrimination, legitimises violence against women and children, and further suppresses freedom of expression. These rules, alongside numerous other oppressive measures imposed by the Taliban such as the ban on female medical education, must be rescinded if the rights of all Afghans are to be protected.

We are also increasingly concerned about the severe impact of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border closure on the delivery of essential health and nutrition supplies. Delays in delivering these life-saving commodities are seriously affecting the lives of the most vulnerable. It is vital these goods are allowed to enter Afghanistan without obstruction.

Special Rapporteur, what more can the international community do to prevent potentially catastrophic breaks in the delivery of essential aid, and to promote every Afghan woman's right to health?

Thank you.

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