

UN Human Rights Council 61: EoV for Item 7

31.3.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

UK Explanation of Vote for Item 7. Delivered by UK Human Rights Ambassador, Eleanor Sanders.

Thank you, Mr President.

We wish to make an explanation of vote on draft resolutions L.8, L.36 and L.37.

All countries must face appropriate and proportionate scrutiny of their human rights record. The UK's longstanding and principled objection to Item 7 remains unchanged. Item 7 unfairly and uniquely singles out the State of Israel in comparison to other countries. Item 7 represents a disproportionate focus on Israel. No other country is treated in this way by the Human Rights Council. The UK will continue to push for consideration of these resolutions under alternative agenda items.

Today the UK has abstained on all three resolutions tabled under this agenda item. This represents a change in our voting position since we were last Members of the Council, when the UK by default voted no on all resolutions under Item 7, including where those votes contradicted stated UK policy and whilst conditions on the ground worsened.

Our abstentions today reflect our continued objection to the unfair procedural mechanism by which these legitimate issues are raised. However, the UK remains resolute in its support for the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and we are proud to have taken the historic decision to recognise Palestine in September 2025.

We reiterate the UK's unequivocal condemnation of Israeli settlement activity. Continued settlement expansion in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, must be reversed immediately and violent settlers must be held to account.

The dire human rights situation in Gaza and the West Bank is completely indefensible. Israel must adhere to its obligations under international law.

We have concerns about how these draft resolutions reflect the International Court of Justice's advisory opinions. The UK respects the independence and authority of the Court and takes its advisory opinions seriously. It is essential that any references accurately reflect the Court's findings. We cannot support language that goes beyond what the Court itself has determined or implies legal conclusions that are properly for judicial determination.

We reaffirm our commitment to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the two-state solution.

We hope that in future, these resolutions will be presented under other items of the Council's agenda.

Thank you

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/un-human-rights-council-61-eov-for-item-7>