

# UN Human Rights Council 61: UK Statement on Human Rights Defenders

13.4.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

**UK Statement for the Interactive Dialogue on Human Rights Defenders. Not delivered due to time constraints.**

Thank you Mr Vice President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report on the challenges human rights defenders face. We also wish to commend her tireless efforts throughout her term to promote the work of human rights defenders.

The UK recognises the essential role human rights defenders play in promoting and protecting human rights. The report demonstrates their bravery and resilience as they carry out this work.

However those defending human rights face increasing attacks, including killings and disappearances. These reprisals are taking place in a context of shrinking civic space and democratic backsliding globally. The UK unequivocally condemns such actions.

The UK therefore welcomes the Special Rapporteur's recommendation to strengthen protection mechanisms. The UK is proud to be funding the new Lighthouse Fund, which is providing protection support to human rights defenders and civil society organisations.

Madam Special Rapporteur, how can the United Nations system best strengthen accountability and protection mechanisms for human rights defenders?

Thank you.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/un-human-rights-council-61-uk-statement-on-human-rights-defenders>