UK Statement

Thank you to Bolivia for leading an important week of discussions at ECOSOC. We thank Bolivia for their pragmatic approach to the resolution this year. We hope this passes with consensus today as a strong statement of our collective support to our humanitarian colleagues who work in the most challenging circumstances.

We have heard throughout this week that global humanitarian need is at its highest level since World War II, driven by conflict, climate change, and governance failures. In 2022, over 300 million people are estimated to need humanitarian assistance – a fourfold increase since 2015. 49 million people are living a step away from famine, compared to 25 million in 2020.

The UK will continue to be a leading supporter of the humanitarian system. Our new International Development Strategy prioritises humanitarian action and commits to providing £3 billion over the next three years.

But money alone is not enough and business as usual is no longer an option. The scale of the challenge far exceeds what the humanitarian system alone can do. The UK’s humanitarian approach sets out the shift we believe is necessary to tackle these challenges.

First, we need to prioritise people in greatest need. The UK is harnessing the power of science and technology to deliver more efficient, scalable, agile, and inclusive solutions. This includes the use of artificial intelligence, modelling and satellite imagery to better forecast disasters, and digital cash transfers to improve the efficiency of humanitarian support.

Second, we need to protect the people most at risk, especially women and girls. The UK is committed to tackling the most harmful consequences of inequality, exclusion
and marginalisation in crises, such as gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. We will also, of course, continue to promote full respect for International Humanitarian Law and advocate for unimpeded access to those in need.

Finally, we need to prevent today’s problems from turning into tomorrow’s crises. We need to anticipate future shocks and build resilience in long-running crises. The UK is harnessing our expertise in the patient development of systems and institutions to strengthen the resilience of countries and communities. We are working with International Finance Institutions, notably the World Bank, and financial markets to diversify the expertise and finance channelled to humanitarian contexts, prioritising most at risk countries as quickly as possible.

But, all our efforts will be undermined if we do not also work for an end to conflict. Political will is needed to end crises across the world including in Syria, Yemen and South Sudan. And we cannot ignore the severe humanitarian and long term impacts of Russia’s war on Ukraine, and its blockading of Ukrainian ports. We echo the Secretary-General's demand - the Russian illegal invasion of Ukraine must end. In the meantime, the UK will continue to join efforts to save lives and livelihoods.