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**United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland**

**National Statement**

**Universal Periodic Review – Burundi**

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Thank you, Mr President.

The UK welcomes the commitments relating to human rights and good governance made by the Government of Burundi at the October 2012 Donors Conference. The UK commends progress made since the 2008 UPR, including abolition of the death penalty and establishment of the National Independent Commission for Human Rights, and other progress made to reform the penal code.

However, challenges remain. The UK strongly objects to the criminalisation of homosexuality. The UK urges Burundi to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; to ensure equal land and inheritance rights; and to investigate and prosecute of all forms of gender based violence.

The UK remains seriously concerned by the use of extra-judicial executions and acts of torture by state agents, and by the lack of accountability for serious crimes.

The UK recommends Burundi to:

1. Urgently hold accountable those responsible for serious crimes committed between 1962 and 2008, ensuring transitional justice mechanisms include: witness and victim protection; an independent prosecutor; and an international commissioner. There should be no amnesty for those who committed war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide.
2. To renew efforts to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; to establish a national preventative mechanism regarding torture; and ensure investigation and prosecution in cases of extra-judicial killing and torture, notably those implicating state agents.

Thank you, Mr President.