

United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland  
National Statement

Universal Periodic Review – Djibouti

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Thank you Mr President,

The UK welcomes the delegation to Geneva and thanks them for the presentation of their report.

We welcome Djibouti's pledge to eliminate delays in submitting treaty body reports and steps taken to bring the National Human Rights Council in line with the Paris principles.

We are also encouraged by initiatives to protect women from discrimination and gender based violence, including the prevention of female genital mutilation. We remain concerned however about the lack of enforcement of article 333 of the Criminal Code, which criminalises female genital mutilation.

We are also concerned that articles of the Penal Code criminalising defamation may limit freedom of expression and that restrictions on media ownership may limit independence and plurality of the media.

While we recognise the need to ensure security, we urge that measures used against large gatherings and protests by security services are proportionate and in line with article 15 of the Constitution, which protects freedom of expression.

We have **two** recommendations;

- To increase public awareness-raising and training of officials designed to tackle cultural justifications for female genital mutilation and discrimination against women, with the aim of increasing the number of reported cases under article 333 of the Criminal Code.
- To review Penal Code clauses on defamation in line with international standards and make public the results

Thank you Mr President