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

**Statement**

**Universal Periodic Review – Niger**

**January 2016**

Thank you, Mr President,

The UK commends Niger’s progress since its last UPR, against a backdrop of significant security and humanitarian challenges. We welcome the openness Niger has shown to those fleeing conflict elsewhere. We urge Niger to ensure human rights protection for all in Niger, particularly those who are seeking refuge.

The UK strongly believes in a free media and the right to freedom of expression. We therefore welcome Niger’s signing of the Declaration of Table Mountain which seeks to abolish the imprisonment of journalists. We urge Niger to ensure journalists and NGOs are not unduly hindered, harassed or detained as a result of their work.

The UK welcomes Niger’s efforts to improve human rights protection for women and girls. Considerable work, however, remains. We call on Niger to do more to end traditional practices that discriminate and target women and girls.

We recommend:

1. That Niger creates and implements a strategy to eliminate harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, child, early and forced marriage, and ‘wahaya’; and to modify traditional stereotypes that are harmful to and discriminate against women;
2. That Niger ensures full respect for the right to freedom of expression and media freedom by preventing all harassment and unduly detention of journalists and civil society activists.

Thank you, Mr President.