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

**Statement**

**Universal Periodic Review – The Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**May 2019**

Thank you,

The UK recognises DRC’s commitment to address their human rights situation. However, the situation remains of serious concern.

We welcome recent successes in bringing perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence to justice, but urge the Government to increase efforts to end impunity for all who commit and direct human rights violations and abuses.

We are concerned by restrictions on media freedom and that those exercising freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly are subjected to intimidation, detention and violence.

We recommend:

1. Ratifying and implementing the 2014 ILO Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention 1930, (PO29).
2. Strengthening capacity and independence of the judicial system to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence, including through training programmes for police officers and health professionals, and providing effective, necessary victim support.
3. Ensuring media broadcasters remain free of political pressure, and protecting journalists, including by prompt, effective investigations into concerns about their safety.

Thank you.