



AI Index: EUR 45/6581/2023  
27 March 2023

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## ORAL STATEMENT

### Item 6:

#### Consideration of UPR reports: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

UN Human Rights Council  
52<sup>nd</sup> Session  
27 February – 4 April 2023

Mr. President,

Amnesty International is gravely concerned that the UK Government is severely damaging the country's human rights protection system.

There is a glaring disparity between the picture painted by the UK in its response to the recommendations of member states, and the reality of UK government rhetoric and its legislative agenda.

The UK Government claims its public order legislation will not impact the vast majority of protesters who are peaceful and do not cause serious disruption. The reality is that the legislation gives sweeping powers to police and its definition of "serious disruption" is so broad that almost any protest action could be included.

The UK Government asserts that The Troubles Bill ensures accountability for gross human rights violations in Northern Ireland. In reality, the *de facto* amnesty resulting from this Bill does the opposite. It shields perpetrators of serious violations such as murder and torture and sacrifices victims' rights to truth, justice and accountability. At the same time, the Bill of Rights aims to replace the Human Rights Act with weaker protections including drastically reducing accountability for human rights violations.

The UK Government claims it is committed to upholding the rights of people seeking asylum under the European Convention and Refugee Convention. The reality is that its new Illegal Migration Bill would effectively close the UK's asylum system; would severely violate the rights of people arriving irregularly in the UK (including refugees and victims of human trafficking); and would even rob British children of citizenship rights.

The UK Government has even begun to attack the legitimacy of key elements of the international human rights protection system itself.

Mr. President,

Amnesty International urges Member States to challenge the UK Government's claims and actions, and the threats these pose to the wider international human rights system.

Finally, we encourage the United Kingdom to implement supported recommendations as soon as possible, to submit a mid-term report on progress towards their implementation, and to use an Item 6 General Debate to bring this to the attention of UN Member States.

Thank you.