Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me express the regret of my Permanent Representative, H.E. Ambassador Dame Karen Pierce for not being able to deliver this statement herself today, due to scheduling conflicts. I wish to reiterate her personal commitment to this issue.

The UK thanks the UN Independent Expert for his inclusive and consensus building approach to his work, which is an integral element of international efforts to tackle violence and discrimination against LGBT people and deliver on the 2030 Agenda commitment to ‘Leave No-one Behind’.

We support his report’s recommendations and particularly welcome his recommendation that States adopt all measures necessary to prevent, investigate and punish violence and discrimination based on gender identity. We further support the recommendation that States “adopt measures to protect defenders and supporters of the rights of transgender and gender diverse persons from attacks, intimidation and other abuses and to create safe and enabling spaces for their work.”

Human rights are universal and should apply equally to all people everywhere. We are deeply concerned by all reports of LGBT persons being arrested, detained arbitrarily or tortured. Those states who commit to combating violence against individuals must fulfil their commitments and protect everyone equally.

The report notes increasing anti-rights discourse by some political and religious leaders that seeks to limit the human rights of LGBT persons. We would like to ask the Independent Expert to elaborate on his proposed methods to examine that narrative under the parameters of hate speech.

In the UK, we have published an ambitious LGBT Action Plan, committing to 75 actions to improve the lives of LGBT people in the UK. This includes improving the recording and reporting of LGBT hate crime and the police response to it, improving how gender identity services work for transgender people, consulting on how to make the gender recognition process less intrusive and bureaucratic for transgender people, and gathering detailed evidence on non-binary and intersex issues.

Thank you.