I.   Addressing the Security Situation in the Middle East

Her Majesty's Government recognizes that the previous year has witnessed a tremendous turnover in the political landscape across the Middle East. In an address to the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister David Cameron stated, "Last week I was in Tripoli and Benghazi. I saw the hunger of a people eager to get on with reclaiming their country, writing themselves a new chapter of freedom and democracy."[1] The systematic and endemic sequence of popular uprisings against tyranny and corruption will have profound consequences for the ongoing tenuous security situation in the Middle East. The United Kingdom commends the nations of Egypt and Tunisia as they independently pursue internal democratization after decades of autocracy. Additionally, after supporting Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, both of which condemned the brutality of Libya's government and authorized all actions deemed necessary to protect civilians, the United Kingdom supports further measures to protect the citizens of Libya from civil anarchy until the Libyans can elect a government. Although Libya is in the process of forming a representative government, the United Kingdom will continue to sustain the NATO-led mission in Libya until a threat no longer exists from the residual remnants of pro-Qaddafi forces.[2] Although Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia have all broken their chains, there is still the lingering question of how should the international community, and the United Nations Security Council in particular, support the popular, free and democratic aspirations of a member State's people once the tyrant has departed? The United Kingdom believes that the UNSC should provide any support which the National Transitional Council within Libya may request, since that particular body commands wide support across tribal boundaries.

Concerning the continuing conflagration of the Arab Spring in states such as Yemen and Syria, the concern for averting potential civil wars grows increasingly critical. The possible impact of internal conflict requires a concerted international effort to stabilize member states, and the United Kingdom aims to reach comprehensive political agreements which echo the demands of protesting citizens and preferably allows those countries to preserve their unity.[3] To this end, the United Kingdom strongly insists President Saleh in Yemen honor his prior agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative and allow a peaceful political transition in its place.[4] However, within Syria the current Assad government has brutally cracked down on peaceful protests. These crackdowns have had the effect of killing over three thousand citizens, justly prompting condemnation from the international community. The United Kingdom has led the chorus of condemnation. Foreign Secretary William Hague declared after a failed Security Council proposed resolution that, "The decision of Russia and China to veto this resolution, and to side with the brutal regime rather than with the people of Syria is deeply mistaken and regrettable."[5] The Syrian government has created a humanitarian crisis along its border with Turkey where tens of thousands of refugees have fled the government's crackdown. In response Turkey's government has established refugee camps and a safe haven to protect the civilians fleeing the oppression.[6] The United Kingdom affirms that the people of Syria will not be forgotten and that all similar member states should ensure, "a peaceful transition to a more representative government."[7]

Looking to the future, the United Kingdom wishes to revisit the previous attempts to condemn Syria within the United Nations Security Council. Her Majesty's Government wishes to see a resolution demonstrating in explicit terms that the brutality of the Assad regime must end, lest it face consequences from the international community. As Foreign Secretary William Hague stated, "Unless there is meaningful change in Syria and an end to the crackdown, President Assad and those around him will find themselves isolated internationally and discredited within Syria."[8]

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[1] "Libya and the Arab Spring Shows the UN Needs a New Way of Working" *United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations* 22 Sept. 2011. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. <http://ukun.fco.gov.uk/en/news/?view=PressS&id=659927482>

[2] "Libya". *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*. 23 Aug. 2011. Web 29 Oct. 2011. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global/issues/mena/libya

[3] "Yemen". *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*. Web. 29 Oct. 2011. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global/issues/mena/yemen

[4] "Foreign Secretary welcomes Security Council Resolution 2014 on Yemen". *United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations*. 21 Oct. 2011. Web. 29 Oct. 2011. http://ukun.fco.gov.uk/en/news

[5] Hague, William. "Syria – Q&A on current unrest." *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*. 4 Oct. 2011. Web. 29 Oct. 2011. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/globalissues/mena/syria

[6] "Killing of civilians and humanitarian crisis on Syrian Turkish border". *International Federation for Human Rights*. 17 June 2011. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4dfeef792.html

[7]Hague, William. "Syria – Q&A on current unrest." *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*. 4 Oct. 2011. Web. 29 Oct. 2011. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/globalissues/mena/syria.

[8] "Foreign Secretary Welcomes Sanctions on Syrian Regime" *United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations*. 2 August 2011. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. <http://ukun.fco.gov.uk/en/news/?view=News&id=630026182>

II.   Examining the Practicality and Effectiveness of Sanctions

The United Kingdom deems the development of more effective and targeted sanctions to be of great consequence. While sanctions may not achieve the expected outcomes in all circumstances, precisely targeted sanctions have a proven history of reasonable success: financial sanctions and arms embargoes aimed at the Apartheid Regime in South Africa led to a peaceful transfer of power within the government; similar sanctions against Qaddafi persuaded him to cancel his nuclear program in the previous decade; and sanctions against Milosevic's nationalist movement encouraged the population to adopt basic human rights concepts.[9] Previously, the United Kingdom has supported the actions targeting Qaddafi and the entities funding his government. Concern over Iran's developing nuclear program prompted embargoes on precise materials which are directly related to both nuclear technology and ballistic missile development programmes. The embargoes have had the intended effect of isolating the Iranian leadership. In efforts to reduce North Korea's nuclear proliferation goals, targeted sanctions have also been implemented under the United Kingdom's leadership against specific organizations that aid the Pyongyang government.[10]

Foreign Secretary William Hague recently elaborated upon the United Kingdom's objectives for the future of targeted sanctions, stating with the example of Iran, "We worked with our EU partners to sanction a number of individuals responsible for serious human rights abuses in Iran. Efforts continue ... Most recently, we have listed under sanctions members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps involved in aiding repression in Syria who are now subject to EU travel bans and asset freezes."[11] The United Kingdom seeks a tougher series of resolutions which condemn human rights abuses in Iran, and targets a wider variety of state industries, government officials, and associated organizations.[12] The United Kingdom believes that the recent EU sanctions imposed onto Syria, which were in part spearheaded by the United Kingdom, should be a model for how the UNSC reacts towards both Syria and Iran in a future resolution.[13] In particular, the Syrian oil industry should be targeted, along with all political and paramilitary entities which are associated with the regime.

III.   Climate Change and International Security

The United Kingdom believes that global stability could be endangered as a due to the side-effects of anthropogenic climate change, either as a direct consequence of natural disasters and poor weather, or indirectly as social support networks maintained by vulnerable come under mounting strain. The United Kingdom believes that developed nations have a moral, political and legal obligation to support states and regions that are principally at risk from the impact of climate change. Several of these regions and states include the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories and Commonwealth protectorates.[14] The island state of Sri Lanka, a former British protectorate, is currently at risk of rising ocean ties and the erosion of coastlines due to the effects of global warming. Emerging governments such as Sri Lanka will be more at risk in regards to climate change. The governments' inability to provide the population with a plan to maximize the existing resources exacerbate internal security issues of the nation. The strains placed upon these governments will create regional instability issues for the international community. Many governments around the world fail to appreciate the accelerated pace of the changing climate and develop contingency plans for addressing their changing environment. The United Kingdom expects climate change to act as a risk multiplier for vulnerable regions, such as Central and Eastern Africa, Southern Asia, and the Caribbean. States within these regions are likely to face escalated concerns such as droughts, potable water shortages, flash floods, and a weakened private sector; security within such states is likely to suffer as a result. Hunger and volatility in food prices will inevitably lead to heightened tensions between domestic factions. In order to address this issue, the United Kingdom has provided £435 million for enhanced humanitarian assistance, and has also contributed an additional £600 million to the UN peacekeeping budget.[15] In 2009 and 2010, the United Kingdom spent a total £683 million on medical aid abroad, including £106 million on water supply and sanitation. Efforts such as these, although humanitarian in nature rather than military in nature, are actions that the United Nations should increasingly support from developed nations. The United Nations Security Council should continue to provide critical peacekeeping and peacebuilding assistance to vulnerable states with a history of resource shortages, since these states are liable to become even more vulnerable as climate change progresses.

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[9] "Sanctions". *UK Mission to the United Nations*. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. http://ukun.fco.gov.uk/en/uk-at-un/thematic-issues/resolving-conflict/sanctions
[10] Ibid.
[11] Hague, William. "Foreign Secretary speaks at 'Imprisoned in Iran' event". *Foreign Commonwealth Office*. 13 Sept. 2011. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=655195482
[12] Ibid.
[13] "Foreign Secretary Welcomes Sanctions on Syrian Regime" *United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations*. 2 August 2011. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. <http://ukun.fco.gov.uk/en/news/?view=News&id=630026182>
[14] "Report highlights new challenges to the UK from international climate change." *Foreign Commonwealth Office*. 11 July 2011. Web. 30 Oct. 2011. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=629684682
[15] Ibid.