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# UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SIXTH COMMITTEE,  
UNGA78, AGENDA ITEM 86

PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTERS – CLUSTER 5

Delivered by Jonathan Hollis

1. The UK will now comment on draft Articles 15, 16 and 17 in turn.

#### **Draft Article 15 – Facilitation of external assistance**

2. Draft Article 15 requires an affected State to take necessary measures, within its national law, to facilitate the provision of external assistance in the event of a disaster. The UK notes that domestic regulations and controls often hinder the delivery of external assistance and so supports the inclusion of this obligation in the draft Articles.
3. The UK notes that the reference to the ‘affected State’ in the draft Article suggests these steps are only taken once a disaster has taken place. However, in the UK’s view, these are steps that should be taken in preparation for disasters.

#### **Draft Article 16 – Protection of relief personnel, equipment and goods**

4. The UK considers that this draft Article, which requires an affected State to take appropriate measures to ensure the protection of relief personnel, equipment or goods, is an important inclusion. We would suggest that ‘appropriate measures’ should include systems to identify and address corruption, fraud and aid diversion.

#### **Draft Article 17 – Termination of external assistance**

5. The UK notes that the premature termination of assistance can be harmful to disaster response and recovery. The view of the UK is that the requirement in the draft Article that an assisting State or actor provide ‘appropriate notification’ in respect of termination will not necessarily mitigate against the risk of harm caused by premature or arbitrary termination of assistance.