



UK Mission  
Geneva

UK Mission Geneva  
PO Box 6  
Avenue Louis Casar 58  
1216 Cointrin GE

Tel: 022 918 2453  
Fax: 022 918 2333

**Note Verbal No. 017**

The Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to submit its response to communication JAL GBR 11/2024, further to the letter dated 20 November 2024 from the Working Group on the issue of transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

The Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



Geneva, 21 January 2025.

Special Procedures Branch  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights



UK Mission to the  
United Nations  
in Geneva

## United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland

### **Response to Special Procedure communication JAL GBR 11/2024 of 20 November 2024 from the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.**

- 
1. The UK shares the widespread concern about the degradation of and relentless attacks on human rights in Nicaragua. This includes the closure of over 5000 NGOs since 2018, the authoritarian control of civic space, and the growing climate of intimidation and repression affecting Nicaraguans in exile. The recent constitutional reforms represent a further deplorable step in the deterioration of Nicaraguans' civil, political, and other human rights.
  2. The reports of harassment and arbitrary detention, and the concerning trend of exiling and removing the citizenship of opposition figures and human rights defenders, are alarming. In the UK statement at Nicaragua's Universal Periodic Review on 13 November 2024, we urged Nicaragua to amend the Special Law 1145, which regulates the loss of Nicaraguan nationality. **In response to JAL GBR 11/2024, FCDO officials will discuss the concerns you raise with Avianca and encourage them to ensure they apply all relevant human rights laws and guidelines in the conduct of their operations.**
  3. More generally, the UK Government is committed to implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). In response to the UNGPs, the UK was the first State to produce a National Action Plan (NAP) and we continue to develop our approach. We expect all UK businesses, including airlines, to respect human rights throughout their operations, in line with the UNGPs.
  4. The UK supports voluntary due diligence approaches taken by UK businesses to respect human rights, in line with the UNGPs and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct. As a signatory to the Guidelines, the UK is legally required to operate a UK National Contact Point. This is an independent function within the Department for Business and

Trade responsible for promoting the OECD Guidelines and managing a non-judicial grievance mechanism for complaints of non-observance by UK businesses.

5. Businesses can also access the overseas business risk pages, managed by the UK's trade and diplomatic network, which include information on human rights risks when trading overseas.
6. This year, the FCDO will also be carrying out a National Baseline Assessment (NBA) on the implementation of the UNGPs. An NBA will contribute to the evidence base to inform the UK's approach to tackling business-related human rights abuses, including in global supply chains. This Government will review the best ways to prevent human rights abuses, labour rights abuses and environmental harms in both private and public sector supply chains.