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UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

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Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on
the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

21 February 2023

Delivered by Melina Lito

(check against delivery)

Mr. Chair,

The United Kingdom thanks the Bureau of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations (Committee) and the Codification Division of the UN Office of Legal Affairs for their ongoing support to the Committee. We look forward to engaging constructively in this Committee and to seeing a satisfactory outcome to the meeting.

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, let me state that the United Kingdom continues to stand with Ukraine and condemns Russia's outrageous attack on Ukraine as a clear breach of international law, and in particular the Charter of the United Nations.

With regard to the ongoing items in this Committee's programme of work, as we will elaborate in the relevant Working Group meetings, the United Kingdom continues to view the proposals submitted by Libya, Cuba, and Belarus and the Russian Federation, respectively, as duplicative of work being done in other forums in the General Assembly, and therefore not necessary.

The United Kingdom also recognises the valuable contribution of the Handbook of Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, and we remain open to additional information on how it can be updated within existing resources.

Mr. Chair,

The United Kingdom notes Iran's updated proposal on sanctions, which we have considered. The United Kingdom is clear that there is no inconsistency or

conflict between autonomous sanctions and the Charter of the United Nations. UK autonomous sanctions are targeted and focused on deterring, constraining, signalling against, and ultimately changing egregious behaviour of individuals and entities, including serious human rights violations, weapons proliferation, and corruption. Such sanctions do not target essential food, medicine, medical equipment or medical assistance and legitimate humanitarian activity. UK autonomous sanctions are lawful, transparent, and allow for due process protections and legal challenge. I can highlight in particular the recent General Licences that we issued to further facilitate aid flows into Syria in response to the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria. We have consistently opposed or voted against language proposals or resolutions that attempt to misrepresent sanctions, and will continue to do so to prevent misinformation about our sanctions being spread to advance political agendas.

The United Kingdom also thanks Mexico for its updated proposal but remains of the view that this Committee is not the appropriate forum for the discussion.

Finally, Mr. Chair, the United Kingdom views peaceful settlement of disputes as first of all the responsibility of the parties to international disputes as provided for in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations. We look forward to listening to the exchange of views in this year's thematic discussion on State practice resorting to regional agencies or arrangements.

Thank you.