**Explanation of vote by Ambassador Matthew Rycroft of the UK Mission to the UN on the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2228 on UNAMID 29 June 2015**

Thank you Mr President.

The United Kingdom welcomes the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2228 renewing the mandate of UNAMID.

The need for this mission is greater than ever. As Council members heard so powerfully in the Arria meeting earlier this month, last year saw the worst suffering for a decade. Darfur now has more than 2.5 million long-term displaced people; Sudan has the greatest number of IDPs in Africa. Millions go hungry and humanitarian access is too often limited by parties to the conflict. And we remain deeply concerned at the growing reports of abuses and violations of human rights, including those that emerged from Tabit last year.

Let us now set aside our differences and give our full support to UNAMID so that it can continue its vital mission.

And UNAMID should now focus on improving its protection of civilians, conflict mediation and support for a peace process. We welcome that it will continue its important human rights role. Serious and unanswered allegations of abuses and violations of human rights have dogged Sudan for over a decade. We encourage UNAMID to monitor, verify and draw attention of the authorities to these reports as a matter of priority.

Mr President, UNAMID cannot continue forever. Through this resolution we have set out that UNAMID’s long term planning should be based on progress towards a set of agreed benchmarks. A political solution to the conflict, starting with a cessation of hostilities, is fundamental to achieving these. We call on all parties to the conflict to work together towards this goal.

As the African Union Peace and Security Council set out in their communiqué, we hope that the Government of Sudan will play a more constructive role with UNAMID. We all share the objective of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Sudan. And ultimately, a well-functioning mission able to fulfil its mandate will allow it to leave safely much sooner, in the best interests of all parties.

But until the Government of Sudan and the UN are working together to resolve the terrible situation in Darfur, we cannot consider imminent exit for this mission. We simply cannot afford to lose focus. In renewing UNAMID’s mandate for another year, we have taken the right step to prevent this from happening.

Thank you Mr President.