

Human Rights Council-31st Session (29 February-24 March 2016)

Clustered ID with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of Human Rights by Persons with Albinism

Statement by Ireland

4 March 2016

Ireland aligns with the statement which will be delivered by the European Union and adds the following.

Mr Vice President

Ireland welcomes both the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism, and thanks them for their presentations. Our remarks today will focus on the issue of albinism.

Ireland congratulates the Independent Expert for her first report to the Human Rights Council. We appreciate her clear vision for the mandate; and welcome her commitment to close cooperation with other relevant mandate holders.

Ireland condemns in the strongest terms attacks perpetrated against persons with albinism, including the macabre use and selling of their body parts for ritual and witchcraft practices. We are appalled by the report's finding that children constitute a large proportion of victims of such ritual attacks. We note with horror the discovery, referred to already in today's debate, just yesterday of the remains of a nine-year old boy with albinism, some days after abduction from his home. This reminds us in the most graphic way of the terror and insecurity people with albinism face every day in many States, and of the reason for our shared commitment to stronger action to protect them.

We are also concerned by the persistence of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against persons with albinism, which often sees them unable to enjoy their rights to education, health, and to participate in public life, as highlighted in the report.

We note the difficulties experienced by the Independent Expert in accessing data on albinism and hope that the continued efforts to raise awareness will promote the strengthening of data collection systems in this regard.

As proud co-sponsors of HRC resolution 28/6, we wish the Independent Expert every success for the continuation of her mandate and trust it will play a role in transforming attitudes towards persons with albinism.

Finally, we would be interested to hear the Independent Expert elaborate further on the role which civil society, including academia, may play in promotion and protection of the rights of persons with albinism.

Thank you