

Human Rights Council – 31st session (29 February – 24 March)

**Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on
the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea**

Statement by Ireland

14 March 2016

Ireland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and adds the following:

Mr President

Ireland thanks the Special Rapporteur for the presentation of his final report to the Human Rights Council. As a traditional cosponsor of the resolution on the DPRK, we once again express our most serious concern about the human rights situation there.

Ireland recalls our full support for the conclusions and recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, and shares the Special Rapporteur’s profound regret that the crimes against humanity documented by the Commission continue. We repeat the pressing need to ensure accountability for these crimes. In this regard, we remain of the view that the Security Council should refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

Ireland abhors the series of human rights violations including torture and other violations against political prisoners, rape, forced abortion, arbitrary detention, extrajudicial executions and violation of freedom of religion and belief, to an extent which the Commission of Inquiry found “without parallel” in the contemporary world.

Notwithstanding the recent deterioration in the security situation on the Korean peninsula, we would encourage the Republic of Korea to continue to engage with the DPRK.

We deeply regret the statement of DPRK, made during the High-Level Segment, to the effect that it would no longer take part in Council sessions examining its human rights record. We reiterate the fundamental legal reality that the human rights situation in the DPRK is a legitimate and ongoing concern of the international community and that - regardless of whether the authorities participate in sessions of the HRC or otherwise - international law is binding upon them.

We note the emphasis placed by the Special Rapporteur in his report on accountability for atrocities and recognise the innovative suggestions put forward. Our question in this regard relates to the basic difficulty in relation to finding ways to allow accurate information to reach inside DPRK. Does the Special Rapporteur have any suggestions on how, despite the very many practical obstacles with which we are all familiar, awareness of the accountability structures of international law could be spread to those persons working at all levels of the official system in DPRK?

Thank you

