

Human Rights Council - 26th session
(10th June – 27th June 2014)

**Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women
and the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights**

12 June 2014

Statement by Ireland

Thank you Mr. President.

Ireland first wishes to thank the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Ms. Rashida Manjoo, for her valuable report to this Council and for her continued good work.

Violence against women is one of the most pervasive and yet least recognised human rights abuses in the world. It is a global challenge, affecting one in three women, and a manifestation of inequality and discrimination. It prevents women and girls from achieving their potential and perpetuates situations of poverty for individual women, families, and societies.

Ireland firmly believes that in addressing issues surrounding violence against women and girls, we must tackle the structural underpinnings of gender inequality which facilitate disempowerment, under-representation, and ultimately vulnerability of women and girls. The first step in addressing gender inequality is recognising it, understanding its root causes and where specific challenges to the achievement of equal rights lie. We need to understand attitudes, behaviours, and practices that perpetuate gender stereotypes, promote unequal power relations and facilitate discrimination and violence against women and girls. We must also recognise the strong link between equal participation in political and public life and the prevention of human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence. Without equitable female participation in decision-making processes at all levels, existing unequal power structures and inequalities will persist.

Madam Special Rapporteur,

In your present report to the Council, you recommend that the Human Rights Council undertake an inquiry into the normative gap in a quest to further strengthen efforts to eliminate violence against women. You note the absence of specific legally enforceable standards, as opposed to the wide array of soft law standards, and previous calls for a dedicated international instrument on the subject. *What do you envisage would be the relationship between a new instrument devoted to violence against women and existing instruments, in particular the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women? And in what distinct ways could such an instrument contribute to tackling the aforementioned structural underpinnings of violence against women?*

Mr. President,

Ireland also wishes to thank the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights for his presentation today. Ireland hosted a productive visit from the previous Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona in 2011. We congratulate Professor Alston on his appointment, and look forward to continued constructive cooperation with this mandate.

Tax avoidance and evasion present a major obstacle to the realisation of human rights. There is an onus on all involved to do more to tackle tax evasion, corruption, and capital flight, and ensure fair and legal financial practices. As part of Ireland's International Tax Strategy, Ireland is committed to engaging constructively and respectfully with developing countries in relation to tax matters, to support them in raising domestic tax revenues in ways that are more efficient, that promote good governance and equitable development, and that allow them to eventually exit from a dependence on ODA. During Ireland's EU Presidency last year, revisions to the EU Transparency and Accounting Directives were approved by the European Parliament. Multinational companies based in the EU are now required to disclose full details of their payments to developing country Governments for every project that they operate in the oil, gas, mineral and logging sectors. Ireland played a central role in the final negotiations of these Directives.

While aid is an important part of sustainable development, it is clear that aid alone cannot solve the problem of extreme poverty. Lasting solutions to problems of poverty and hunger must be underpinned by developing countries' own leadership, their ability to raise revenue and boost foreign direct investment, to integrate into world markets, and to address inequality. Generating, managing, and using revenues fairly and sensibly is crucial. Revenue from taxation and customs provides governments with the funds needed to invest in development, reduce poverty, and deliver public services directed towards the physical and social infrastructure required to enhance long-term growth. Equitable tax systems can serve as major tools in addressing inequality and promoting human rights, as well as fostering social cohesion and promoting democratic processes.

Special Rapporteur,

How can the international community better use ODA to assist partner countries in increasing domestic revenue collection?

I would like to reiterate to both Special Rapporteurs Ireland's support for your ongoing work. We look forward to engaging with your offices in the future.