

Human Rights Council – 27th session (8-27 September)

Statement by Ireland under agenda item 4 – Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Ireland aligns with the statement delivered by Italy on behalf of the European Union and makes the following additional remarks.

Ireland welcomes this opportunity to address some of the human rights situations that require the Council's attention, in addition to the remarks made on our behalf in the EU statement. We will also address individual country situations during interactive dialogues on **Ukraine**, the **Syrian Arab Republic**, **Sudan**, **South Sudan**, the **Central African Republic**, **Somalia** and **Cambodia**.

Ireland continues to be seriously concerned about the human rights situation in **Egypt**. We call on the Egyptian authorities to establish independent and transparent investigations into the killing of protestors and security forces since 30 June 2013. Ireland reiterates its deep concern in relation to the arbitrary and indiscriminate detention without trial of protestors and calls on the authorities to investigate and address reports of violence and sexual abuse of detainees. Ireland is troubled by the persistent reports of selective justice and disproportionate sentencing, including the sentencing of protestors to death. Ireland further calls on the Egyptian Government to foster civil society, including by implementing the constitutional protections of freedom of assembly and expression.

In relation to **Iran**, we acknowledge the protection afforded to some religious minorities including various Christian denominations, individuals of Jewish faith and Zoroastrians. We are very concerned, however, that some groups, including those of the Baha'i faith and some Christian groups, are subject to significant persecution. We hope that Iran's stated intention to improve human rights protection, which we welcome, will include these minority groups.

Ireland condemns the recent violence in **Libya** which has had a devastating humanitarian impact. We encourage all parties involved in the hostilities to engage constructively with the mediation efforts of the UN, and the recently appointed UN Special Representative Bernardino León, in order to reach an immediate ceasefire.

While we welcome the positive steps taken by the Government of **Bahrain**, including its cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner, the human

rights situation in the country remains of concern. We condemn the continuing arbitrary detention of human rights defenders, detained for peacefully exercising their human rights.

Finally, Ireland is concerned that a recent pattern of harassment and what has been described as the persecution of human rights and civil society activists has been developing in **Azerbaijan**. We are particularly concerned about the increasing number of human rights defenders, journalists, opposition and civil society activists who have been targeted by the authorities.

We urge all States to consider requesting the assistance of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in their efforts to address and improve human rights protections in their territories.

Thank you