

Human Rights Council 38th session

Clustered ID with Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity and the Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association

18th June 2018

Statement of Ireland

Ireland aligns itself with the EU statement and would like to add the following.

Mr President,

Ireland welcomes both the Special Rapporteur and Independent Expert and thanks them for their presentations today.

In the year in which we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, let us recall the principle of universality on which it is founded. Human rights apply equally to all persons and there can be no exception. For that reason Ireland will continue to prioritise the rights of LGBTI persons.

We welcome the Report of the Independent Expert and support the objectives of his mandate.

We thank the Independent Expert for highlighting in his report that violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity remains an issue throughout the world today. We share the Experts concerns over the violence, in some cases leading to death, perpetrated against LGBTI individuals.

Ireland welcomes, in particular, the Independent Expert's recommendations that States repeal laws that criminalise consensual same-sex relations and that States should ensure that the death penalty is not imposed as a sanction for consensual same-sex relations.

We would like to ask the Independent Expert how he plans to work on the issues set out in the Report over the coming year?

Ireland welcomes the Report by the Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association detailing the trends he has identified in the course of his work with regard to the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association. Ireland encourages all Member States to comply with the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and facilitate country visits where requested.

Ireland strongly believes in the right to freedom assembly and association and the important role this right plays in a free and democratic society. Recent crackdowns on peaceful protests and gatherings are a direct infringement of this right. Ireland also greatly values civil society space and the impact which civil society can have on the human rights situation in a country. The work of civil society and human rights defenders is negatively affected by restrictions on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. In this regard, we agree with the Special Rapporteur's conclusion that the closing of the civic space around the globe has

resulted in serious limitations to the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

We share the Special Rapporteur's concerns with regards to the use of legislation to restrict legitimate exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and, the use of restrictive laws to target the right to peaceful assembly of civil society. We are also worried by the excessive use of force to repress peaceful protests and gatherings and the stigmatisation and attacks perpetrated on civil society actors.

Special Rapporteur, how do you intend to encourage states to support your mandate and facilitate your requests for country visits?