

Human Rights Council – 39th Session

ID with CoI on OPT

24 September 2018

Statement by Ireland

[Ireland aligns with the EU statement and adds the following]

Mr (Vice) President,

My Government and the people of Ireland were profoundly shocked by the events in Gaza in May, and the scale of the casualties inflicted by Israeli forces on Palestinian demonstrators.

In the intervening period, we have remained concerned by the many reports of ongoing violence, of high numbers of casualties, particularly young children, and of the extreme difficulty in providing even basic medical care to civilians.

Ireland supported the convening of the 28th Special Session of the Human Rights Council and cosponsored the resolution establishing the Commission of Inquiry.

We believe that this outcome best responded to the calls by the UN Secretary General and others, for an independent investigation into these devastating events.

Ireland acknowledges that Israel, like every country, has the right to defend its territory.

International law, however, clearly defines the circumstances in which force, and in particular deadly force, can be used against civilians.

Such force must only be used in cases of real and immediate threat to life, and only as a last resort – that is, when other methods have failed. The use of force should also be proportionate to the threat posed.

Mr (Vice) President,

Ireland welcomes the distinguished members of the Commission before us today, especially the Chair Mr Canton, appointed to his role only last week.

Today's oral update has allowed us hear from the Commission on their proposed way forward in preparation of the report for presentation to the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council next year.

We thank the Commission members for their time and commitment, we support them in their role, and we wish them well with the challenging work that lies ahead.

Thank you.