Statement of Ireland

42nd session of the Human Rights Council

Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi

17 September 2019

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union.

Mr (Vice) President,

Ireland would like to thank the Commission of Inquiry for this presentation, and to acknowledge the ongoing work of the members of the Commission.

In advance of the upcoming elections, scheduled for 2020, Ireland calls on the Government of Burundi to ensure that adequate political and civil society space exists to allow for inclusive, democratic and transparent elections. Ireland further calls on the Government of Burundi to ensure that fundamental freedoms are upheld in the run up to the elections, including freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and the freedom of the press.

Ireland continues to be extremely concerned about reports of human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and torture. Ireland asks the Government of Burundi to ensure that such violations are fully investigated.

Ireland calls again on the Government of Burundi to engage with the High Commissioner with a view to permitting the OHCHR to fulfil its mandate, to re-open its office in Bujumbura, which after operating for 23 years was closed earlier this year. Ireland strongly urges Burundi to engage with the OHCHR and all UN Human Rights mechanisms in a constructive manner, and to engage fully with members of the Commission of Inquiry, granting full access and the protections required to complete the Commission's important mandate.

Ireland urges President Nukrunziza and his government to use the remainder of their term to leave a legacy of peace and stability by respecting democratic principles and universal human rights.

Finally, noting the serious challenges faced by the Commission of Inquiry and OHCHR to fulfil their mandate as a result of the barriers to access in Burundi, could you elaborate on any potential roadmap for the continuation of engagement in Burundi?

Thank you.