



Statement of Ireland

45th session of the Human Rights Council

Urgent Debate on the situation in Belarus

Madam President

Ireland welcomes the holding of this Urgent Debate to address the serious deterioration in the human rights situation in Belarus and thanks the High Commissioner and other speakers for their interventions.

Since the Presidential elections last month, which were neither free nor fair, we have seen unacceptable State violence against peaceful protestors resulting in severe injuries and loss of life, arbitrary detentions, crackdowns on civil society, human rights defenders and the media and internet shutdowns. Ireland unreservedly condemns all these actions and joins those calling for them to stop immediately.

Events in Belarus in the last few weeks show a complete disregard for the principles of the Charter and human rights. We must be clear: the violence, falsified elections, and curtailments on freedom of expression, association and assembly are unacceptable. It is vital that the human rights and democratic will of the Belarusian people are respected. Ireland has noted the active role of women in the protests and calls for the pro-active inclusion of female leaders in future negotiations.

Ireland shares the concerns of the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Belarus and we regret that Belarus continues to deny her access to the country in her official capacity.

We urge the Belarusian authorities to quickly grasp, with both hands, the offer of the OSCE Chair to visit Minsk and facilitate a national dialogue.

Thank you.

ENDS