



## **Statement of Ireland**

### **40th session of the Human Rights Council**

*Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism*

**1 March 2019**

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union.

Mr President,

We welcome the Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism, Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, and thank her for the presentation of her annual report.

Ireland believes there is no conflict between effective counter-terrorism measures and the promotion and protection of human rights. The goals are complementary and mutually reinforcing. We know this from our own national experience. In line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy agreed by the General Assembly, we call on States to ensure any measure taken to combat terrorism complies with their obligations and commitments under international law.

As a member of the core group on civil society space, we thank the Special Rapporteur for her focus on civil society and human rights defenders. We share her concern at undue restrictions on the legitimate exercise of peaceful assembly, association and other fundamental freedoms in the name of national security and counter-terrorism. As she rightly points out, the use of vague, repressive and overly broad legislation to target civil society actors and curtail civic space is wholly inconsistent with meaningfully attending to genuine terrorist threats.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur that an effective counter-terrorism strategy is one that empowers civil society, not weakens it. We fully support the recommendations made in her report and welcome consideration of this topic by the Human Rights Council.

*Madame Special Rapporteur, what practical steps can States take to support the meaningful participation of civil society organisations in the fight against global terrorism and extremism?*

Thank you