

Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories

Monday, 21 March 2016, Geneva

Statement by Ireland

Ireland welcomes the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories and thanks him for the presentation of his report to the Council today.

Ireland notes with great concern the resignation of the Special Rapporteur due to Israel's refusal to allow him access to the occupied Palestinian Territory, despite assurances that he would have such access. Ireland agrees with the Special Rapporteur's assessment that Israel's refusal to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur's work, including by facilitating unfettered access to the occupied Palestinian Territory, impacts on Israel's own human rights credibility. Ireland hopes that the Special Rapporteur's successor will have greater success in fulfilling the mandate to promote and protect the effective enjoyment and full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people, without discrimination, in the occupied Palestinian Territory. The Special Rapporteur's successor will have Ireland's full support in this regard.

Ireland is deeply concerned at the continuing human rights violations in the occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular those related to restrictions on freedom of movement. Ireland calls on the Government of Israel to take into account the Special Rapporteur's recommendations to facilitate the free movement of Palestinians within the occupied Palestinian Territory, and to respect and protect Palestinians' right to education, health services and economic development, as well as recognising and respecting Palestinian residency rights. In addition, Ireland calls on Israel to reverse its deplorable policies of land seizures and misappropriation, and evictions of Palestinian families, which have contributed strongly to recent deteriorations in the situation on the ground. Ireland deeply regrets the loss of life in recent violent incidents, and urges all leaders to work to calm the situation, and refrain from provocative and inflammatory words and actions.

Ireland also calls on the Palestinian authorities to take into account the Special Rapporteur's recommendations to implement their obligations under international human rights treaties (including regarding freedom of movement) and to encourage the national political parties to engage with each other to resolve political divisions.

To conclude, we would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for his efforts, and to ask him for his thoughts on the future of this role, given his recent resignation and the restrictions he faced when attempting to fulfil his mandate.