

Human Rights Council - 28th session
(2 March – 27 March 2015)

**Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights
situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

16 March 2015

Statement by Ireland

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union and adds the following.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for his report and presentation today.

The human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been a major issue of concern for Ireland for many years. We agree with the Special Rapporteur that it is now more than ever essential that the international community redouble its efforts to effect meaningful change. We welcome this report as another important step, with concrete proposals on how to address the issue of international abductions, enforced disappearances and related matters.

We fully support the development of a multi-track strategy to address the issue of international abductions as proposed by the Commission of Inquiry. We agree that the Human Rights Council and General Assembly can and should continue to add dimensions to international understanding and advocacy on this issue.

More generally, Ireland echoes the call of the Special Rapporteur that we must address the suffering of North Korea's people - including the continued reports of systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights perpetrated in an environment characterised by the absence of due process and rule of law; sanctions on DPRK citizens who have been returned from abroad; and severe restrictions on freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, opinion and expression. We urge continued strong support for and engagement from the Security Council on these issues.

We note the Special Rapporteur's assessment that the second UPR of the DPRK saw a "notable improvement over the lack of collaboration extended during and after the first cycle". While we too were disappointed at the failure to accept recommendations relating to the findings of the Commission of Inquiry and related issues, we note that 113 recommendations were accepted, mostly in the field of economic and social rights as well as relating to vulnerable groups. We have two questions. Our first relates to this issue:

- *Are there ways in which States and UN mechanisms can follow-up on the recent UPR, in order to attempt to improve the situation on the ground in DPRK?*
- *And what can or should States do to support and cooperate with the field-based structure now in train?*

Thank you