

## **Human Rights Council – 29th Session**

### **The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights oral update on Boko Haram**

#### **Statement by Ireland**

**1 July 2015**

High Commissioner,

Thank you for providing an update about the ongoing situation regarding Boko Haram.

Ireland has consistently condemned the senseless acts of violence being perpetrated by Boko Haram. As the brutal actions of this group continue to spread beyond north-eastern Nigeria, Boko Haram has grown to represent a threat to the peace and security of the whole region, including Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The regional nature of the threat is deeply worrying.

We are appalled by the discovery of at least 70 bodies in a mass grave on the outskirts of the town of Damasak in Northern Nigeria, days after it was freed from Boko Haram forces. We are also appalled by reports that more than 400 women and children were abducted by Boko Haram at the time Damasak was freed. Nor have we forgotten the abduction of more than 200 young girls from a school in the town of Chibok over a year ago.

Primary responsibility for the security situation in Nigeria rests, of course, with the Nigerian Government. Nigeria's new Government now has a responsibility to create a secure environment in which the human rights of all are promoted and protected, including in those areas affected by Boko Haram. We reaffirm our commendation of Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon for having issued standing invitations to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council and we strongly encourage all States to consider the valuable guidance, support and expertise which the Special Procedures could provide in promoting and protecting human rights while countering the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. We will continue to support the authorities of all affected States in their efforts to counter further radicalisation and terrorism and to promote human rights.

It is also important to highlight the serious humanitarian situation in Nigeria and neighbouring countries, which is a direct result of the violent activities of Boko Haram. It is

estimated that since 2011 over 1.5 million people have been displaced within Nigeria and that in addition some 150,000 Nigerians have fled to neighbouring countries. In March Ireland dispatched €900,000 worth of food relief to provide assistance to thousands of Nigerian families, who have sought refuge in the Minawao refugee camp in northern Cameroon. We encourage all States to assist the Nigerian Government, as well as other Governments in the region, in responding to the humanitarian crisis caused by the terrorist activities of Boko Haram.