

Human Rights Council – Special Session on Iraq
1 September 2014
Statement by Ireland

Mr President

Ireland wishes to add some remarks to those made on our behalf in the statement of the European Union.

It is appropriate that the Human Rights Council has convened this Special Session to address the deteriorating human rights situation in Iraq. Recent events in Iraq are a matter of the most serious concern, for the Iraqi people, for the security and stability of the wider region, and for the international community.

The extreme brutality and lawlessness demonstrated by ISIS in Iraq, and also in Syria, is utterly abhorrent and unacceptable. The catalogue of human rights abuses and criminal acts committed in Iraq in recent times is so extensive and extreme that no short statement in this chamber can capture the horrors which have been experienced by the Iraqi people. Ireland is particularly concerned at the plight of the most vulnerable, especially women, children and minority groups. We have noted with particular outrage the open and possibly genocidal attacks on minority communities. The extreme threat to the small but ancient Christian, Yazidi and Turkman communities have aroused great concern, but we are aware that members of the larger Sunni and Shia Muslim communities have also suffered dreadful attacks.

Ireland appreciates the efforts of OHCHR, the special procedures of this Council and the whole UN system to respond to the current crisis. We encourage the Iraqi Government to cooperate fully with the incoming High Commissioner and with OHCHR in this respect.

Mr. President,

The Iraqi people have endured many difficulties and suffered a great deal over the past ten years. We encourage the new government in Iraq, when it is formed, to investigate and combat human rights violations and abuses by all actors in Iraq.

Ireland is outraged by the humanitarian crisis in the region which has already suffered three years of war in neighbouring Syria and we have contributed to the international relief effort, within our means. In response to the latest crisis we have contributed over €1 million for humanitarian relief in northern Iraq.

But any response to the unfolding humanitarian and security crises is incomplete if not accompanied by a renewed and inclusive approach to politics in Iraq. Ireland sincerely hopes that a genuinely inclusive government will soon be formed which can assure Sunnis of their role in the governance of Iraq.

My delegation looks forward to the adoption by this Council of a strong resolution which is responsive to the very serious human rights situation, and to its speedy and effective implementation.

Thank you.