

Human Rights Council – 31st Session (29 February – 24 March 2016)

Panel discussion on climate change and the right to health

Statement by Ireland

3 March 2016

Mr. Vice President,

Ireland welcomes this opportunity to discuss the relationship between climate change and the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. This is a complex relationship and we look forward to learning from the insights and experiences of the panel and all those intervening.

Mr. Vice President

The inclusion of the reference to human rights in the preamble of the Paris Agreement was a significant milestone; and would not have been possible but for the strong engagement of the international human rights community, including civil society, in building awareness of how human rights obligations inform better climate action. However we must seek to build further on this achievement. We hope that today's discussion will identify concrete ways in which human rights standards and mechanisms can contribute to our collective response in seeking to mitigate the impact of climate change on health.

As a signatory to The Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action, Ireland is committed to delivering a response to climate change which is informed by and safeguards human rights; and enables us to build on the progress achieved through our development programmes in relation to global health.

We look forward to the OHCHR study on the relationship between climate change and health, scheduled for the 32nd session of the Council. We are acutely aware of the disproportionate impact climate change has on those in already vulnerable situations, arising from a variety of factors including poverty, minority status, disability and gender. We are particularly interested in the views of the panel as to how the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and women's health can be addressed?

Thank you.