



Statement of Ireland
42nd session of the Human Rights Council

Item 5: Interactive dialogue with the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights on the report of the Secretary-General on reprisals

19 September 2019

Mr (Vice) President,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union.

Ireland welcomes this interactive dialogue, and we commend the efforts of the Assistant Secretary-General to address acts of intimidation or reprisal across the UN system.

As a member of both the core group on reprisals and the core group on civil society space, Ireland is committed to preserving a safe and enabling environment for civil society participation at the United Nations.

Ireland believes unequivocally in the right of everyone, individually and in association with others, to access, cooperate and communicate freely with international human rights bodies, including the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

The negative trends presented in the Secretary-General's annual report, including the issue of growing self-censorship, and the continued use of national security arguments by States to block access to the UN, are matters of grave concern.

It is also deeply worrying that those working on the rights of women and LGBTI people, including sexual and reproductive rights, seem to be particularly targeted.

Ireland deplores all acts of intimidation or reprisal against those who seek to engage with the United Nations on human rights, and we will continue to support all efforts to stop, prevent and ensure accountability for these reprehensible acts.

In this regard, we welcome the good practices highlighted in this year's report, while recognising that we all must do more to protect the safety of those who cooperate, seek to cooperate or who have cooperated with the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations.

Mr Gilmour, what concrete recommendations would you make to States to preserve a safe and enabling environment for civil society at the United Nations, particularly at meetings related to the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, including the UPR?

Thank you.