



## **Statement of Ireland**

### **53rd session of the Human Rights Council**

*Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus*

**05 July 2023**

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and thanks the Special Rapporteur for this report.

Ireland remains gravely concerned by the human rights situation in Belarus, which continues to deteriorate. We call on Belarus to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and to fully adhere to the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

Ireland is deeply alarmed by reports of the continued use of torture and ill-treatment against those in custody and the especially harsh detention conditions for political prisoners. We urge Belarus to unconditionally release all political prisoners, and cease harassment and reprisals against individuals exercising their human rights.

We urge Belarus to introduce a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, and join international efforts towards its universal abolition.

Ireland condemns policies aimed at systematically repressing civic space, civil society organisations and human rights defenders and restricting the enjoyment of rights to freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association. This pervasive environment of fear and repression has forced many individuals into exile.

Ireland urges Belarus to end its repression of dissent, civil society space, independent media, human rights defenders, and to end its involvement in Russia's war on Ukraine.

*Special Rapporteur, your report references the importance of fostering a safe environment for human rights defenders and civil society activists who have relocated abroad to flee persecution. How can states best support activists in exile?*

Thank you.