

**Human Rights Council – 30<sup>th</sup> session (14 September – 2 October 2015)**

**Item 4**

**Human rights situations that require the Council's attention**

**21 September 2015**

**Statement by Ireland**

Ireland aligns itself with the remarks made on our behalf by the European Union and adds the following

Mr President

Ireland has expressed, or will express, its views during interactive dialogues and panel discussions under this and other agenda items on the human rights situations in **Sudan, Somalia, DPRK, Ukraine, Libya, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic** and the **Syrian Arab Republic**. Ireland was also a signatory of the joint statement delivered by Switzerland on **Bahrain** earlier this session.

Ireland is particularly concerned by reports about the increased use of the death penalty, which we oppose in all circumstances. We are particularly disappointed at the end of the moratorium on the use of the death penalty in **Chad**; and at imposition of death sentences in cases where the sentenced person was a minor at the time of commission of the alleged offence in states including **Iran, Pakistan** and **Saudi Arabia**. In that regard we are deeply concerned at reports that a death sentence will imminently be carried out in Saudi Arabia in the case of Ali Mohammed al-Nimr, who was a minor at the time of his arrest.

While Ireland welcomes the recent signature of the peace agreement in **South Sudan**, the cycle of conflict has been reinforced by longstanding impunity and failure to treat killings, sexual and gender-based violence, and other gross human rights and humanitarian law violations as crimes. Ireland urges South Sudan to commit to the investigation and prosecution of all crimes under international law with necessary international participation.

Ireland deplores continuing impunity in relation to human rights violations in **Burundi**. Restrictions on freedom of expression, arbitrary detentions, and the intimidation of human rights defenders and journalists remain issues of grave concern.

Ireland is deeply concerned with the deteriorating situation in human rights in **Azerbaijan**. We are concerned by a number of recent judgments against activists in Azerbaijan, in particular the sentencing of investigative journalist Khadija Ismayilova in September 2015 to seven and a half years in prison and the sentencing, in July and August 2015, of human rights activists Leyla and Arif Yunus. We call upon Azerbaijan to immediately end all forms of persecution of rights activists and to protect the space for civil society and freedom of expression.

Ireland condemns absolutely and unreservedly the campaign of violence against religious and ethnic minorities in **Syria** and **Iraq** by the non-state actor ISIS. The use by ISIS of mass murder, mass sexual violence, enslavement, mass displacement and reported use of chemical weapons are all war crimes. Its barbarity and inhumanity have no place in any society and must be brought to a complete and final end by all appropriate means.

Ireland remains deeply concerned by the worsening situation in the **occupied Palestinian Territory**, in particular by the unequal treatment of Israelis and Palestinians under the law, and the continuing illegal policies to forcibly remove Palestinians from their homes and their land in much of the territory. These actions are both provocative and unjust, and continually undermine attempts to achieve peace and security for all parties.

In **Myanmar**, the underlying root causes of ethnic tensions in Rakhine State between the Muslim Rohingya population and the Buddhist Rakhine population must be urgently addressed. The severe curtailment of the basic rights of Muslim Internally Displaced Persons in parts of Rakhine State, living in conditions of detention with limited access to essential services, is a serious violation of international human rights law. The right of Rohingyas' to self-identification must be respected, including in the citizenship verification process, and that access to fundamental rights should be guaranteed to all citizens.

Thank you