

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

Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

Statement by Ireland

15 March, 2016

Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and would like to add the following.

Mr President,

Ireland wishes to thank the members of the Commission for their report and their vital contribution in upholding the rights the Syrian people. This conflict has now endured for five years, during which the work of this Commission has been the principal instrument for recording the multiple atrocities inflicted upon the Syrian population.

The reports of the Commission lay bare the crimes which have been deliberately used as instruments of policy by perpetrators, violating the fundamental rights of millions of Syrians who have endured starvation, displacement, gassing, mass sexual violence, torture and murder. There can never be any impunity for such crimes. The work of the Commission is essential to ensuring accountability for these crimes.

The recent bombings of schools and hospitals, including a maternity hospital, have no military justification and constitute war crimes. The use of starvation sieges against civilian populations can never be justified.

Terrorism against minority communities, including mass murder, forced conversions, sexual violence against women and even children are unspeakable crimes.

Ireland reiterates its call for the referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court, and urges that the Security Council fulfil its duties to uphold international law in Syria under the UN Charter.

Thank you.