

General Debate under item 10

Statement of Ireland

1 July 2015

Mr President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and would like to add the following:

Ireland strongly believes that Item 10 is an invaluable tool in assisting States who wish to seek technical assistance to improve their human rights record and to build their human rights capacity. There are many country situations where the State itself has taken a leading role in addressing the human rights situation in its jurisdiction. Ireland would like to thank OHCHR for the support given to such States and for providing expertise, technical assistance and guidance. We particularly appreciated the updates from the Heads of Field Presences which were delivered during a meeting last month organised by OHCHR. Hearing positive examples of how technical assistance and capacity building projects have lead to real change on the ground was useful and encouraging and we hope that this practice can continue. We also hope that this sharing of information on progress will encourage States to view Item 10 as both a positive and practical means of assistance.

Having acknowledged the real contribution that Item 10 can make to a State's human rights record, it is important to state that there are cases where Item 10 is simply not enough. Item 10 should not be invoked in cases where severe human rights violations are occurring in a State where all parties are involved in atrocities. Such cases are deserving of more acute attention from this Council and are more appropriately dealt with under item 4. Even if a State has shown willingness to engage under Item 10, some situations are just too grave to be adequately addressed under Item 10. This should not be seen as a punitive measure, but rather a reflection of the reality of the situation.

Ideally Item 10 should be invoked as an early warning system and before grave human rights violations occur. Unfortunately this is not always possible in a world which is now increasingly fraught with conflict.

Ireland urges States to seriously consider relevant factors such as the reality on the ground when deciding under which item to discuss country situations. This is not about naming and shaming; it is about acknowledging the gravity and urgency of some human rights situations and recognising that for some cases providing technical assistance and capacity building alone is neither appropriate nor effective to ensure accountability and an end to impunity.