

**71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Third Committee**

Interactive Dialogue with the President of the Human Rights Council

**Statement by Ireland
4 November 2016**

Madam Chair,

Ireland wishes to align itself with the statement of the European Union.

Ireland would like to welcome Ambassador Choi Kyong-lim and to thank him for this overview of the work of the Human Rights Council.

This is, of course, an important year for the Human Rights Council and last February Ireland took the opportunity to reflect, with a wide range of stakeholders, on the first decade of the Council and our first term of membership. The Council added to its achievements this year through the appointment of the first Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. In doing so it sent an important message of solidarity to the members of the LGBTI community.

We are therefore very concerned and disappointed at the draft resolution that has been tabled in the Third Committee on the report of the Human Rights Council which seeks to defer implementation of HRC resolution 32/2. We believe that this draft resolution is an unwarranted attempt to subvert a legitimate decision of the Human Rights Council and creates an unnecessary and dangerous precedent in allowing for resolutions of the HRC to be questioned or reopened by the General Assembly.

Naturally, Ireland was pleased with the successful outcome on last June's resolution on civil society space which we led once again with Chile, Japan, Sierra Leone and Tunisia. However, despite the strong message this resolution sent to all stakeholders, reports of reprisals and intimidation of civil society representatives continued to be a feature of sessions of the Council this year. We urge all States, and in particular the newly elected Council Members, to fulfil their obligation to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, including by respecting and supporting civil society engagement at the Council.

We thank the President for the important role he has played in supporting civil society participation and space and would like to ask his views as to how the increased occurrence of reprisals can be best addressed.

During its first decade the Council has demonstrated its capacity to respond to a wide range of human rights issues, to address emerging challenges and to highlight situations of

concern, most recently though the convening of the Special Session on the deteriorating situation of human rights in Syria and the recent situation in Aleppo.

We are conscious that the Council's workload has steadily increased since 2006 and recall the President's remarks during the event last March to mark the 10th anniversary that this ever-increasing workload poses a serious challenge for the Human Rights Council. We are interested in the President's views as to how Members and Observers can work with you to overcome this challenge.

Thank you.