

Human Rights Council – 27th Session.

**Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the Independent Expert on the
situation of human rights in Somalia**

Statement by Ireland

24 September 2014

Thank you Mr President.

Ireland aligns itself with statement made by the European Union.

We would like first of all to congratulate the Independent Expert on his appointment and wish him well in this important but challenging position.

Ireland endorses the Independent Expert report's emphasis on the importance of identifying long-term and sustainable solutions to the many challenges facing the Somali people. The process of change in fragile states, such as Somalia, can be slow and faltering, particularly in the absence of tangible improvements in security and governance, and in incomes and livelihoods.

Ireland remains extremely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Somalia. We note the concerns expressed by UN-OCHA about a looming drought in the country threatening to worsen an already acute crisis. We strongly support the recommendation in the report that the international community considers longer-term solutions to food insecurity in Somalia, such as support for agriculture and livelihood programming, while also providing immediate food relief.

Ireland has contributed close to €4 million in the current year in humanitarian funding to UN and NGO partners working in Somalia.

Mr President, allegations referred to in the Independent Expert's report that AMISOM troops have been responsible for violations of human rights are indeed alarming. A recent NGO Report (8 September 2014) also documented allegations that AMISOM soldiers had abused their positions of power and raped, assaulted and sexually exploited women and girls in the most vulnerable situations.

We echo the Independent Expert's call for AMISOM and the Somali National Armed Forces to comply with humanitarian law and to practise zero tolerance

towards sexual exploitation and abuse. Ireland is currently in the process of developing a new National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Ireland's plan stresses the importance of ensuring that troops engaged in peace-keeping operations are fully trained on human rights principles and norms, including in relation to gender equality.

But, of course accountability and sanctions at all levels also need to be a core part of the response.

Ireland would like to take this opportunity to ask Mr Nyanduga how he is planning to engage with AMISOM senior command on the issue of alleged human rights violations perpetrated by AMISOM troops?

Thank you, Mr President.