



## **Statement of Ireland**

### **50th session of the Human Rights Council**

*Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on TNCs re: report on The Coronavirus disease pandemic: lessons learned and moving forward*

**21 June 2022**

Mr. President,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and thanks the Working Group for this timely report, which sets out the devastating impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, on the lives of many workers. It is deeply concerning that its impact is expected to last for many years.

It is clear that the impact of the pandemic is uneven and discriminatory, exacerbated for those already experiencing human rights violations and abuses, including in the context of conflict, climate change and inequality. Women and primary caregivers and others in precarious employment situations were particularly affected.

We are gravely concerned by the reported increase in intimidation of, and violence against, human rights defenders during the pandemic, including by armed groups, with environmental and land defenders being particularly at risk. It is unacceptable for Governments and businesses to use the pandemic as a pretext to restrict the work of human rights defenders and civil society. In this regard, Ireland welcomes the launch of the Working Group's guidance on human rights defenders.

I would like to ask the Working Group for their sense of whether businesses have generally absorbed the message that those with supply chains where human rights protections are in place have proved the most resilient during the pandemic.

Thank you.