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Statement of Ireland

54th session of the Human Rights Council

Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Truth, Justice and Reparation

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and thanks the Special Rapporteur for his report.

In particular, we welcome the Special Rapporteur's consideration that "Amnesty provisions and other rules aimed at impeding investigations and punishment of persons responsible for grave human rights violations are contrary to international law, as States must first meet their duties regarding justice and the effective remedy of victims' rights."

Ireland shares this view and is concerned about the impact of the UK Government's Northern Ireland Troubles Bill on victims, survivors and families, as well as more broadly on reconciliation. The immunity from prosecution provisions included in this Bill are not conducive to reconciliation, which remains essential to peace in Northern Ireland.

The Bill constitutes a unilateral departure by the UK from the broadly accepted process established by the Stormont House Agreement 2014. A process which drew on the learning from other transitional justice processes and which had the support of victims, civil society and political parties.

As your report notes, 'States must take necessary and appropriate action to punish the perpetrators of serious crimes.' In order to achieve true reconciliation, compliance with international human rights law and ensuring that victims have a clear path to truth and justice are central to the success of any transitional justice process.

Special Rapporteur, in this context, in order to achieve lasting reconciliation, could you give your views on amnesties and their impact on lasting reconciliation?

Thank you