



Statement of Ireland

76th session of the United Nations General Assembly

Third Committee

**Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of
the right to freedom of opinion and expression**

18 October 2021

Chair,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and thanks the Special Rapporteur for this important report and its focus on the mutually reinforcing nature of gender equality and the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

This wide ranging and detailed report addresses, in a systematic way, the myriad barriers and challenges that women face in exercising their right to freedom of opinion and expression.

The focus of the report on both the online and offline realms is extremely timely and valuable. In every region of the world, we are seeing women's ability to safely exercise their right to freedom of opinion and expression under attack, particularly through significant and horrifying misogynistic online threats and abuse, which often translates into real world sexual and gender-based violence.

We welcome the Report's emphasis on the gendered impacts of growing restrictions on civil society and the particular challenges faced by female journalists and activists.

The wide-ranging costs of speaking up and out for women and gender non-conforming people is well documented and, with it, the serious consequences for individuals but also for wider society. And while these problems are globally pervasive, the gross violations and abuses of the human rights of women and girls in both Afghanistan and Myanmar are particularly alarming at this time.

Special Rapporteur, you recommend coordinated approaches by digital platforms to make digital spaces safe and gender inclusive. What is your view on the most effective way to bring about such coordination?

Thank you.

[247 words]