



**Statement of Ireland**

**76<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Third Committee**

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*Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus,  
Ms Anaïs Marin*

**25<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

Chair,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report, which is an important update on the appalling human rights situation in Belarus.

The people of Belarus have demonstrated tremendous fortitude in the face of the oppressive actions of Alexander Lukashenko and the Belarusian authorities.

Last year, hundreds of thousands of Belarussians marched for freedom, democracy and the right to choose their own leader. Their bravery was met with state-sponsored violence, arbitrary detentions, and curtailments on freedom of assembly and freedom of speech.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her report's focus on the rights of women and girls. We particularly share her concerns about the use of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women protestors and systematic reprisals against women human rights defenders.

Ireland has supported sanctions and other measures against individuals and entities associated with Alexander Lukashenko and the Belarusian authorities. Mr Lukashenko has responded by exploiting vulnerable migrants, including those from war-torn countries, sending them to the borders of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

We urge the Belarusian authorities to implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur and end its autocratic practices.

Finally, we would like to draw on the expertise of the Special Rapporteur to ask her the following question: how can economic sanctions be applied in a way that persuades Alexander Lukashenko and the Belarusian authorities to respect human rights and implement a peaceful transition to democracy?

Thank you.

[242 words]