

**Human Rights Council 38th Session (18<sup>th</sup> June – 6<sup>th</sup> July)**

**Item 4 – General Debate**

**Statement of Ireland**

**27<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union.

Mr President,

An enabling environment for civil society, and in particular for human rights defenders, is key to the promotion of human rights in all States. We are concerned by continued restrictions on civil society space and reprisals against human rights defenders in **Cambodia** and the **Russian Federation**. We call on **Bahrain** to maintain its commitments to respect freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and the right to fair trial. We also remain concerned about human rights protection in **Azerbaijan** and the failure to implement the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights.

Ireland maintains its strong support for the right of the **Palestinian** people to self-determination. We are deeply concerned by the continued use by Israel of law and force to expand settlements in the Occupied Territories, pushing Palestinians off their land contrary to international law. We are also concerned by the increased pressure on both Israeli and Palestinian civil society and new efforts to exclude outside observers from scrutinising the Israeli occupation.

We remain gravely concerned by the human rights situation in **Yemen**. We look forward to the presentation of the report of the group of Eminent Experts at the September Session, which should help establish the facts necessary to ensure accountability for all violations.

Ireland reaffirms our strong and unequivocal opposition to capital punishment in all circumstances and for all cases and remains deeply concerned by its continued use by States.