



Statement of Ireland

44th session of the Human Rights Council

Annual discussion on the human rights of women
Panel: Accountability for women and girls in humanitarian settings

13 July 2020

Madam President, *[Mr/Madam Vice-President,]*

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union and thanks the panellists for their presentations on this important topic.

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) constitutes a fundamental violation of human rights. The anniversaries this year of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and Resolution 1325, remind us of the continued need to work together to uphold the rights of women and girls in conflict and humanitarian settings.

Accountability is a key component of protection, including prevention from conflict-related SGBV. Ireland advocates for and is investing in greater accountability for human rights violations and abuses that occur in conflict settings. This includes support for the work of the International Criminal Court and for investigation of such crimes.

Ireland will also continue to work to ensure prevention of, and accountability for, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) perpetrated by peacekeeping, humanitarian and development actors. As a member of the UN Secretary General's Circle of Leadership on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Ireland has actioned the UN's zero tolerance policy with respect to SEA and will continue to highlight and work towards the elimination of such abuses.

Ireland's international development policy places gender equality and women's empowerment as a central priority. Our Third National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security sets out an ambitious agenda to strengthen Ireland's work in achieving gender equality in conflict-affected contexts.

We want to see the full, effective, and meaningful participation of women in humanitarian responses. During our term on the UN Security Council, Ireland will look to ensure that the perspectives and needs of women are considered in every mandate renewal, and in every geographic and thematic discussion. We will do this because accountability for women and girls strengthens the chances of building peace and, importantly, helps ensure that where we have achieved peace, we sustain it.

Thank you.