



Statement of Ireland
43rd session of the Human Rights Council

Item 2: General debate on the High Commissioner's oral update

15 September 2020

Thank you Madame President,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union and thanks the High Commissioner for her forthright and comprehensive statement yesterday.

That statement, and the reports presented to the Council this Session, present a sobering assessment of the human rights challenges persisting in every geographic region.

At this time of global crisis, it is deeply troubling that many of the most fundamental individual freedoms are under attack.

In particular, Ireland is greatly concerned by: ever-growing pressures on civil society space; the push back on freedom of expression, assembly and association; and attacks on human rights defenders, journalists and media workers.

As States, we must work harder to protect the rights of the individuals and communities we represent.

Madame High Commissioner,

The COVID pandemic has highlighted and intensified vulnerabilities and inequalities globally. We support your view that a human-rights based response is essential for the protection of vulnerable people. It is also critical if we are to safeguard progress on the SDGs.

In this regard, the collective effort of the UN's human rights system is more needed than ever, shining a spotlight on human rights violations and abuses. It is essential that the work mandated by this Council receive the necessary funding to carry it through effectively.

Finally, Ireland would like to emphasise once again and in the clearest possible terms, our unwavering support for your work, Madame High Commissioner, for the Office you lead and for the independence of its activities.

Thank you