



## **Statement of Ireland**

### **46th session of the Human Rights Council**

#### **Item 2: Enhanced Interactive Dialogue High Commissioner's report on Belarus**

**25 February 2021**

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union and we thank the High Commissioner for her report.

It is now over six months since the fraudulent elections in Belarus. Ireland continues to stand in solidarity with the Belarusian people and their peaceful demand for the right to choose their own leaders in free and fair elections.

Ireland condemns the ongoing and systematic persecution of journalists and human rights defenders. We remain deeply troubled by apparent attempts to criminalise human rights work in Belarus as further evidenced by the recent detention, ill treatment and interrogation of the Director of the Office for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Syarhei Drazdouski, and the Office's legal counsellor, Aleh Hrableuski. We again call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those unjustly detained, including political prisoners.

Independent, thorough, and transparent investigations into allegations of human rights violations are urgently needed. Ireland urges the Belarusian authorities to adhere to their international obligations and OSCE commitments by fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. We call on Belarus to implement the recommendations of the High Commissioner's report and those in the OSCE Moscow Mechanism report.

Madame High Commissioner,

*It is clear that impunity breeds further violence. We would be interested in your thoughts on the current status of the rule of law in Belarus.*