



Statement of Ireland

49th session of the Human Rights Council

Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders

11 March 2022

Mr. President,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her report and welcome the focus on anti-corruption work. Ireland commends all those working to expose and combat corruption, including human rights defenders, whistle-blowers and journalists. Their brave work is vital to combat corruption's undermining of human rights and the transparent functioning of States in the interest of their people.

We are deeply concerned by your report's findings, including acts of intimidation, threats and attacks against anti-corruption human rights defenders. We note with particular concern the gendered nature of these attacks.

Ireland is fully committed to the protection of human rights defenders, including anti-corruption human rights defenders. To ensure their full protection, Ireland has recently announced legislation that will prohibit strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), as recommended in your report.

Ireland urges States to take concrete steps to prevent acts of intimidation and reprisal against human rights defenders. Impunity for such acts must not be tolerated. We call on all stakeholders to ensure adequate follow-up and thorough investigation into all allegations of these abhorrent efforts to silence human rights defenders.

Special Rapporteur, we echo your call on States to recognise activists engaged in anti-corruption work as human rights defenders. **What other actions should States take to ensure an enabling environment for anti-corruption human rights defenders?**