



Statement of Ireland

47th session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

1 July 2021

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her report presented to the Council. We share her view that the spread of online disinformation continues to have a negative impact on human rights. It can disproportionately target individuals in already vulnerable situations, as well as erode public trust in institutions, thereby weakening democracy.

Ireland is concerned by the use of disproportionate measures such as internet shutdowns and vague and overly broad laws which criminalise and censor online speech and shrink civic space. We believe that States have a responsibility to promote a safe and enabling environment both online and offline for civil society actors, including human rights defenders. Disinformation campaigns whether by state or non-state actors are unacceptable.

It is well-documented, that women human rights defenders are particularly vulnerable to these attacks. Ireland welcomes the report's recommendation that states and companies confront gender disinformation and fully integrate gendered perspectives into their policies and programmes.

Madam Special Rapporteur, Ireland shares your view on the need for a multi-stakeholder response to tackle disinformation. In your view, what can states do to strengthen engagement with technology companies, journalists and media workers, as well as civil society organisations, in the pushback against disinformation?