



Statement of Ireland

Interactive Dialogue on the report of OHCHR on the right to privacy in the digital age

51st session of the Human Rights Council

16th September 2022

Mr. Vice President,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and thanks the High Commissioner for this report, which paints a worrying picture of the ways in which digital technologies can be exploited to monitor, profile, and control populations and undermine the right to privacy.

It is vital that in an ever expanding digital environment, the universal human right to privacy is respected by States and corporations. We know that many states are engaging in the widespread abuse of hacking tools and widespread surveillance of public spaces, which has a particularly detrimental effect on women, girls, LGBTI+ persons, and persons belonging to minorities.

Spyware tools can and have been used against journalists, human rights defenders, activists and politicians. We are particularly concerned by your report's findings that human rights defenders and politicians have been subjected to arrest, torture, and extrajudicial killings as a result of hacking software being used against them. We know that spyware is often abused under the guise of combatting terrorism and other crimes. We therefore strongly urge all states to use such technology in a limited way and in line with international human rights law.

Deputy High Commissioner, in line with the recommendations of your report, can you share an example of best practice protections in the collection, analysis and sharing of social media intelligence that ensures that human rights of those using digital technology are upheld?

Thank you.