



## **Statement of Ireland**

### **40th session of the Human Rights Council**

*Clustered interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and the Special Rapporteur on torture*

**28 February 2019**

Ireland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Mr President,

Ireland warmly welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and we thank him for his work carried out to date.

Support for civil society, including human rights defenders, is a long established priority for Ireland, and we reiterate our commitment to protecting and promoting human rights globally at the UN and other multilateral fora.

With this in mind, Ireland considers it vital that the international community strengthen efforts to defend and promote a safe and enabling environment for all human rights defenders, including by assisting the Special Rapporteur in his work to increase visibility of human rights defenders around the globe.

Women human rights defenders are especially vulnerable and we therefore welcome the focus of this year's report on the situation of women defenders who, as noted by the Special Rapporteur, can often face additional gendered risks and obstacles in the promotion and protection of human rights.

*Mr. Forst, what steps can States take to support confidence-building measures in official institutions, in particular for women human rights defenders?*

Turning now to the issue of torture – we thank the Special Rapporteur for his most recent report and we share the concerns noted therein. We reiterate our firm belief that the absolute prohibition of torture is central to the international human rights framework and we welcome the report's important focus on the relationship between corruption and torture or ill-treatment.

Thank you.