

Human Rights Council 39th Session (10 – 28 September 2018)

Item 5 – Interactive Dialogue

Statement of Ireland

19 September 2018

[Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union]

Mr (Vice) President,

Ireland reiterates its longstanding support for the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms in the promotion and protection of human rights for all.

We believe unequivocally and without qualification that the ability of groups and individuals to cooperate and to seek to cooperate with these mechanisms without fear of reprisal is critically important.

For this reason, we have been proud to work in a core group of countries that has consistently brought the issue of reprisals before the Council.

We commend in the strongest terms the commitment of ASG Gilmour to his work on this issue.

Ireland warmly welcomes the **Secretary-General's annual report on reprisals** (A/HRC/39/41): it makes an invaluable contribution to our discussion today.

We are profoundly troubled by the allegations of intimidation and reprisals documented in the report.

We recognise the vital role played by civil society in advancing human rights.

We remain deeply concerned therefore by the increasing levels of reprisals and acts of intimidation detailed in the report, which seek to discourage civil society and human rights defenders from engaging with international human rights bodies, representatives and mechanisms.

Today's interactive dialogue provides an invaluable and historic opportunity to reflect on the report's findings and consider ways forward.

We would therefore like to ask ASG Gilmour for his thoughts on the measures that States could take to address the question of accountability for such acts of reprisals.

Thank you.