



Statement of Ireland

44th session of the Human Rights Council

Item 4: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus

10 July 2020

Madam President, *[Mr/Madam Vice-President,]*

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union.

Ireland welcomes the Special Rapporteur and thanks her for her comprehensive report.

We share the concerns of the Special Rapporteur with regard to ongoing human rights issues in Belarus. Of particular concern is the continued use of the death penalty. While we welcome increased engagement by Belarus in international and national dialogue on the death penalty, we strongly support the Special Rapporteur's call for a moratorium as a first step towards its full abolition.

Ireland also shares the concerns of the Special Rapporteur over the sustained restrictions on freedoms of assembly, association, opinion and expression, and the arbitrary detention of civil society activists, peaceful protesters and independent journalists in particular.

We urge Belarus to fully implement the Special Rapporteur's recommendations to ensure systemic and sustainable improvement with regard to the human rights situation.

Finally, Ireland regrets that Belarus continues to deny access to the Special Rapporteur in her official capacity. We call on Belarus to co-operate fully and engage with the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus.

Madam Special Rapporteur,

Ireland would be interested to hear your views on the prospects for improvement in the human rights situation, particularly with regard to freedom of peaceful assembly and arbitrary detentions ahead of Presidential Elections in August 2020.

Thank you.