

Human Rights Council – 28th Session (2-27 March 2015)

Annual Interactive Debate on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Statement by Ireland

10 March 2015

Thank you Mr. President,

Ireland aligns itself with the intervention made earlier by the EU.

Ireland welcomes this important discussion on the human rights of persons with disabilities as well as its focus on the right to live independently and be included in the community.

Ireland would also like to congratulate **Ms. Catalina Devandas Aquilar** on her appointment and looks forward to working with her as Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.

We thank the Office of the High Commissioner for the preparation of its Thematic Study on the subject. As the Study notes, the right to live independently in the community is underpinned by the right of persons with disabilities to equal recognition before the law; persons with disabilities should enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.

Ireland has sought to make progress on this important issue and comprehensive reform of the legislation is currently underway in Ireland relating to capacity and decision-making by persons who have difficulty in making decisions unaided. The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Bill is a far-reaching Bill which provides for a system that offers a continuum of options to support people in maximising their decision-making capability.

Ireland notes one of the Thematic Study's conclusions that "persons with disabilities are the best experts regarding their needs." *In this regard, we would welcome the panellists' views as to how States can further empower persons*

with disabilities so that they may fully participate in, and contribute to, the advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities?