

30th Session of the Human Rights Council (14 September-2 October 2015)

**Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples and
the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

Statement of Ireland

22 September 2015

Ireland would like to add some remarks to those made on our behalf by the European Union.

Mr Vice-President,

We congratulate the **Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** for her timely report on human rights violations against indigenous women and girls. We note with concern that violations are often amplified for indigenous women and girls, who suffer double discrimination, both as indigenous people and due to their gender. Their extreme poverty, poor access to food, water and health care not only leads to higher mortality rates, when compared to their male and non-indigenous counterparts, but also to the higher mortality rates of their children.

We welcome the report's consideration of the situation of women indigenous human rights defenders. They play a vital role in promoting the rights of their communities and of other women and girls. Yet, they face many risks for carrying out their activities, including sexual violence and murder. These crimes are rarely investigated and the perpetrators often act with impunity.

In this light, we would like to ask the Special Rapporteur a number of questions:

- The report recommends that States "ensure the protection of the activities of all female human rights defenders". *Can you elaborate on measures, if any, that have been successful in securing the protection of female indigenous human rights defenders? How can international organisations actively support the situation of female indigenous human rights defenders in this respect?*

Turning to the **Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, Ireland would like to thank the Expert Mechanism for its study on the promotion and respect of the rights of indigenous peoples with respect to their cultural heritage.

Indigenous peoples have a vast body of knowledge and cultural practices, closely intertwined with their land, territories and resources. Therefore, it is essential for indigenous peoples to participate at all levels of decision-making which affects their natural and cultural heritage, free from intimidation and violence. Ireland is deeply concerned about recurring attacks and imprisonment of indigenous persons who call for the respect of their natural and cultural heritage, especially in relation to corporate activities.

-What measures can corporations implement to include the views of indigenous peoples when carrying out activities that could damage their natural and cultural heritage? What steps can corporations take, parallel to the State's responsibilities, to ensure that indigenous human rights defenders are not harmed for raising awareness on their natural and cultural heritage in the course of corporate activities?