

Human Rights Council – 27th Session.

Report of the Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Sudan.

Statement by Ireland

24 September 2014

Mr President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and thanks the Independent Expert for his efforts in preparing this important report.

The report acknowledges that Sudan has made some progress in putting in place legislation, policies and structures to promote and protect human rights. Nonetheless, implementation remains a significant challenge.

The work underway within the education system to integrate human rights issues into the curriculum is very welcome.

We note the broad consultation which has informed the report, including some engagement with civil society organisations and human rights defenders. However, we are concerned that the report refers to the continued curtailment of the activities of civil society organisations. In particular we would wish to highlight the concerns expressed during Mr Baderin's visit that the Sudanese government is restricting civil society organisations working on women's rights and gender equality, with one Khartoum-based women's rights organisation being closed by the Government in June of this year. We echo the recommendation of the Independent Expert that Sudan should take all necessary steps to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.

Regrettably also, the report notes that 160,000 children under the age of 5 have not received routine vaccinations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. We strongly endorse the recommendation that armed movements in Sudan facilitate humanitarian access to the conflict areas in order to save children from preventable diseases.

Ireland would like to take this opportunity to ask Mr Baderin his views on how the environment for civil society organisations in Sudan will evolve in the coming period - in particular the implications for organisations working on

gender equality and women's rights - given the reported shrinking of space for these groups?

In conclusion, Mr President, Ireland remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Sudan and has contributed €3 million in humanitarian funding to UN and NGO partners working there.

Thank you, Mr President.