

Human Rights Council 38th Session

Panel Discussion on Internally Displaced Persons

26th June 2018

National Statement of Ireland

Thank you Mr. President,

Ireland aligns itself with the intervention made on behalf of the European Union and also expresses its appreciation of and support for the work of Special Rapporteur Jimenez-Damary.

Of the almost 70 million people worldwide today who have been forced to flee their homes, well over half have been displaced within the borders of their own countries. The factors which have obliged these people to move are in most cases the same ones that oblige people to seek refuge in other countries: conflict, instability and human rights violations. The situations in which they live are as difficult as - and often more difficult than - those faced by refugees. Furthermore, the internally displaced are made up of a majority of women and children who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and denial of their fundamental rights.

As has already been pointed out, the international community has finally, after many years of insufficient action, begun to take serious steps to address the issue of large-scale cross-border movements, with the New York Declaration of 2016, co-facilitated by Ireland, representing a milestone and the ongoing work on the Global Compacts an essential next step. It is now time to recognize that the internally displaced deserve the same level of attention.

Of course some progress has been made and the very fact that this dialogue is taking place is significant. We have now had the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement for twenty years. We have recognized that the mandate of UNHCR extends to the internally displaced since the 1970s. What we need to do now is to step up to the challenge of addressing this issue with the same energy that we are putting into cross-border movements. I can assure you that Ireland is prepared to play its part.

Thank you.