



Statement of Ireland

46th session of the Human Rights Council

High-Level Panel on Death Penalty: Human rights violations related to the use of the death penalty, in particular with respect to whether the use of the death penalty has a deterrent effect on crime rate.

23 February 2021

Madame President,

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU.

We thank the distinguished panellists for their presentations here today. Ireland remains strongly opposed to the use of the death penalty in all cases and in all circumstances. The final and irreversible nature of the death penalty underlines the impropriety of its use as a criminal punishment. Accordingly, Ireland continues to seek its universal abolition.

The death penalty constitutes cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and is contrary to the right to life while also negatively impacting on a number of other basic human rights.

We agree with the conclusions set out in the Secretary General's 2019 report that there is little evidence that the death penalty had an impact on reducing levels of crime nor deterring its commission.

It is a welcome development that some 140 States have abolished or introduced a moratorium on the death penalty either in law or in practice, or have suspended executions for more than 10 years.

Ireland remains gravely concerned by the number of states who have sought to either reintroduce the death penalty, expand its scope or resume executions.

In countries where the death penalty remains in use, Ireland is particularly troubled by the executions of minors, pregnant women and persons with disabilities. In countries where the death penalty remains a criminal punishment, Ireland calls for a moratorium on its use, as a first step towards abolition.

It is essential that accurate and timely information on the use of the death penalty is made available to states, civil society and the public to ensure informed debate on the death penalty and its impact on society can take place.

Distinguished panellists, what measures can be taken to encourage more countries to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR?

Thank you.