

**Human Rights Council – 30th session
(14 September – 2 October 2015)**

Interactive dialogue with Commission of Inquiry on Syria

Statement by Ireland

21 September 2015

Ireland supports the statement of the EU and adds the following:

Mr President,

Ireland thanks the Commission of Inquiry for its work and today's oral update.

Ireland is appalled that the Council yet again must learn of further, unspeakable, crimes committed against the Syrian people from the report of the Commission. The Commission rightly highlights the inhumanity of a conflict waged primarily against civilians and the absence of any progress towards an end of this merciless violence.

Our calls for accountability and justice, political negotiations and peace are without meaning for those who continue to visit atrocity on the Syrian people with impunity. The scenes of devastation, the flight of millions of people who seek nothing more than to escape from the violence which has shattered their country, the incalculable cost of reconstructing a nation consumed by war: these realities cannot be evaded by any observer.

Syria is becoming a country whose rich heritage from its past is being obliterated by conflict and whose future is fading as its young people leave and fully half of its remaining children are becoming a generation without education. Its children are growing up in an environment without security and are even being used as executioners by terrorists. Syrian women, as reported by the Commission, are victims of violence, sexual violence and even of slavery, with all parties to the conflict denying Syrian women their fundamental rights.

All parties to this conflict are dependent on the backing of international stakeholders. The role of these parties has been to prolong and deepen an

already appalling internal conflict, as regional and other States seek to promote their power and prestige in a country which has been so weakened that it can never be an ally of any strength or value. I ask the Council to consider the worth of any State which has endured the devastation which Syria has endured and what conceivable advantage can any member of the international community gain from Syria's future political allegiance?

We all have a duty to support to support an end to the conflict. The emergence of terrorist groups such as ISIS/Daesh, which pose a threat to international peace and security, are the consequence of Syria's disintegration. Only an end to this conflict can serve the interests of the international community. Ireland calls on all States to use their full influence to bring about an end to this conflict, to lend their full support to the efforts of UN to renew negotiations based on the 2012 Geneva Communiqué, and urges the Security Council to uphold international law and ensure full accountability for crimes committed in Syria by referring the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court.

Ireland asks the Commission – what actions should this Council and the States represented here undertake to ensure that there is no impunity for crimes committed during the Syrian conflict?