



**Statement of Ireland**

**76<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Third Committee**

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**Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Promotion and protecting of human rights while countering terrorism, Ms. Fionnuala Ní Aolain**

**Wednesday, 13 October 2021**

Thank you, Chair

Ireland aligns with the statement of the European Union and thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report and for her presentation today.

We commend the Special Rapporteur for continuing to carry out her pioneering work this year, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the launch of a global tracker on the use of exceptional powers, to ensure that pandemic responses were necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory.

The Special Rapporteur's report highlights how human rights-compliant capacity-building and technical assistance play a valuable role in strengthening a "whole-of-society" approach to countering terrorism. Regrettably however, civil society participation and civilian oversight is often lacking from such programmes. Ireland believes that civil society belongs at the heart of UN peacebuilding and counter-terrorism efforts. We have worked hard to bring the voices of civil society to the Security Council and we welcome the Special Rapporteur's call to meaningfully engage civil society and affected communities as partners in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of capacity-building and technical assistance, in line with the principles of do no harm.

Ireland supports the Special Rapporteur's call for a dedicated analysis of the impact of initiatives, such as those undertaken by the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, on women and girls.

Finally, it is imperative that UN entities engaged in the provision of counter-terrorism capacity building and technical assistance address the uncomfortable questions posed by your report and ensure that their programmes comply with international law. Independent oversight and human rights-based monitoring and evaluation have a key role to play in this regard.

*Special Rapporteur,*

*Your report highlights the need for independent oversight of the UN counter-terrorism architecture. We would be interested to hear your views on the functions of such a mechanism and how it would contribute to the provision of human rights-compliant capacity-building and technical assistance by UN entities?*

*Your report details your concern about the misuse of counter-terrorism powers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Has the situation evolved since the outbreak of the pandemic and what steps can States take to ensure that their response is appropriate?*

Thank you.

**350 words**