

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

34<sup>th</sup> session

Item 5

Statement delivered by Hungary on behalf of core group

15 March 2017

**Mr. President,**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights on behalf of the core group of countries, namely Ghana, Ireland, Uruguay, Fiji and my country Hungary, as well as on behalf of 62 other countries.

We highly appreciate the designation of Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Andrew Gilmour. We strongly believe that this important development will ensure a more systematized and coordinated response to the deeply worrying issue of intimidation and reprisals and will help to put an end to impunity for attacks against those cooperating with the UN on human rights issues.

We share the former Secretary-General's alarm about the growing number of reprisals, which take many forms. In this respect, we reiterate that through several resolutions, in particular Resolution 16/21, the Human Rights Council strongly rejected any act of intimidation and reprisal against individuals and groups who cooperate or have cooperated with the UN and urged States to prevent and ensure adequate protection against such acts. In line with this commitment, we invite Member States to cooperate with the ASG and assist him to fulfill his mandate, to lead the UN efforts to put an end to intimidation and reprisals against those cooperating with the UN on human rights, including human rights defenders, by taking up the issue within the UN system and Member States and advise the SG and the HC accordingly. We are convinced that the exploration of all avenues of action is crucial, and we place special emphasis on the dissemination of best practices.

**Mr. President,**

We find particularly worrisome that the latest report of the Secretary-General once again documents several cases of reprisals and intimidation by States, including Council members who are meant to uphold the highest standard of human rights promotion and protection and fully cooperate with the Council. Therefore, we reiterate our call on every State to take all necessary measures to prevent and deter acts of intimidation and reprisals, including by raising awareness and by investigating and ensuring accountability and effective remedy for such acts, whether perpetrated by State or non-State actors and to inform the SG and the Council accordingly.

The Secretary-General intends to strengthen the collection of information on allegations of intimidation and reprisals by asking all parts of the United Nations system to report to him on a more regular basis. We would welcome more frequent reporting on the issue of reprisals and follow-up by ASG Gilmour, thereby increasing accountability and ensuring a more timely response.

**Mr. President,**

Acts of intimidation and reprisals should be seen not only as pursuits aimed at preventing or stopping anyone from cooperating with the UN but as an attack against the credibility and effectiveness of the UN human rights system as a whole.

Notwithstanding the primary obligation of States to prevent and address reprisals, the Human Rights Council and its President and Bureau also have a duty to prevent and respond to alleged cases of intimidation and reprisals against those who provide information or seek to engage with the Council, and to ensure accountability when these acts occur. In this respect, we encourage the President of the HRC and the Bureau to continue to give detailed consideration to such cases brought to their attention, to take immediate steps as are necessary and to automatically submit them to the ASG and to the SG for inclusion in his annual report.

We also encourage other human rights mechanisms such as special procedures and treaty bodies to continue to play an active role in strengthening our collective response to reprisals.

**Thank you, Mr. President!**

1. Albania
2. Andorra
3. Argentina
4. Australia
5. Austria
6. Belgium
7. Bosnia and Herzegovina
8. Botswana
9. Brazil
10. Bulgaria
11. Canada
12. Chile
13. Costa Rica
14. Croatia
15. Cyprus
16. Czech Republic
17. Denmark

18. El Salvador
19. Estonia
20. Fiji
21. Finland
22. France
23. Georgia
24. Germany
25. Ghana
26. Greece
27. Guatemala
28. Honduras
29. Hungary
30. Iceland
31. Ireland
32. Israel
33. Italy
34. Kenya
35. Latvia
36. Liechtenstein
37. Lithuania
38. Luxembourg
39. Malta
40. Mexico
41. Monaco
42. Mongolia
43. Montenegro
44. Netherlands
45. New-Zealand
46. Norway
47. Panama
48. Paraguay
49. Poland
50. Portugal
51. Republic of Korea
52. Republic of Macedonia
53. Republic of Moldova
54. Romania
55. Serbia
56. Sierra Leone
57. Slovakia
58. Slovenia

59. Spain
60. Sweden
61. Switzerland
62. Tunisia
63. Turkey
64. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
65. United States of America
66. Ukraine
67. Uruguay