

Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Older Persons and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery including its causes and consequences

Mr President,

Ireland would like to begin by first aligning itself with the statement of the European Union and to make the following additional remarks.

Independent expert on older persons

Ireland would like to congratulate the Independent Expert on older persons on her first report to this Council. Ireland recognises the importance of her work particularly in light of the unprecedented growth of the ageing population around the globe, which the report estimates will reach 1.2 billion by 2025.

We agree that discrimination and preconceived perceptions of capacities, as well as the lack of visibility surrounding the issues faced by older persons, are real concerns.

The report helpfully outlines the existing international standards, legislation and policies which protect and promote relevant rights. Ireland welcomes the clarification that your work will focus on best practices and implementation of that existing legal framework, as we are concerned that further division or categorisation of rights-holders might be counterproductive in terms of undermining of the universality of human rights.

Could you elaborate on best practices identified to date on how implementation of the existing human rights obligations can be improved so as to further promote older persons enjoyment of their rights?

Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery including its causes and consequences

Ireland would also like to congratulate the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery on her first report to this Council, while also acknowledging the work of her predecessor which features in the report.

The sheer magnitude of the problem as described in the report is abhorrent and deeply troubling.

We note in particular the fact that the report highlights the problem of the invisibility of contemporary slavery, due to insidious forms such as domestic servitude and also reflects the potential links between business and exploitation or slavery-like practices.

In that regard, Ireland welcomes your decision to include business, including transnational corporations, and forced labour in global supply chains as an area of focus in your work. We see a clear link here to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Our question relates to this point:

Could you elaborate on the role of business, in this regard, and in particular on the opportunities presented by implementation of the Guiding Principles?

Thank you.