UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
34th session

Clustered interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders and the Special Rapporteur on torture

Statement by Slovenia

Mr. Chairperson,

Slovenia aligns itself with the EU statement.

We thank the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders for his presentation today. It is unacceptable that in many parts of the world human rights defenders - including defenders of LGBTI rights, women's rights and those defending the rights of minorities and indigenous people, as well as environmental defenders still face risks of suffering from different forms of discrimination, threats or attacks. In some instances even their family members are not spared. Human rights defenders must be able to carry out their activities in environment that empowers them to defend and promote human rights for all.

In your report, you addressed an important point - the lack of visibility for the situation of defenders and of recognition of defenders' work. In this respect, we would like to highlight the importance of raising public awareness through human rights education. Human rights education adds to the visibility and understanding of the role of human rights and of their defenders, which in turn reduces the possibility for their human rights violations.

Finally, in your report you also touched upon the issue of reprisals against defenders or other civil society actors engaging with the UN or other international organizations. Given the increasing instances of intimidation and reprisals observed by mandate holders, the UN system is now paying more attention to the issue of reprisals. Slovenia welcomes the new mandate of the Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights, Andrew Gilmour, to lead UN work on ending intimidation and reprisals against human rights defenders. The question that we would like to address to you is, how can we best fight impunity and stop reprisals if the country under question is not cooperative?

Thank you.