

Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland, Mr. Jim Kelly, to the 6th Friends of Human Security Meeting

New York, 4 June 2009

I am delighted to join you all today at this sixth meeting of the “Friends of Human Security” and I would like to thank Japan and Mexico for organising this meeting. Today I will take the opportunity to report on the Human Security Network’s activities since the last meeting in November 2008, including on the 11th Ministerial Meeting of the Human Security Network which took place in Dublin on 27 May 2009. Ireland has had the honour of chairing the Network for the past year and has now handed over the Chairmanship to Costa Rica, who we know will play a strong and active role on behalf of the HSN in the year ahead.

Ireland’s Chairmanship of the HSN coincided with the 10th anniversary of the Network and this important milestone has provided a timely opportunity for reflection. As many of you are already aware, the HSN emerged from the anti-personnel landmines campaign and the first Ministerial Meeting took place in Norway in 1999. Since then, the Network has expanded its activities to include a range of human security issues and to promote the concept of human security in a variety of different fora. This is a common endeavour that we share with the Friends of Human Security.

At the 11th Ministerial Meeting of the HSN in Dublin, Ireland was pleased to facilitate internal discussions which allowed us as HSN members to take stock, to reflect on our successes, and to consider how to take forward the work of the Network. Building on previous discussions during our Chairmanship, the Ministerial Meeting allowed us to look

ahead to the role that the HSN can play in the future, work that will now be ably taken forward by Costa Rica as Chair. We were delighted that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Mr Micheál Martin, performed the official handover of the HSN Chairmanship to Costa Rica on behalf of the Irish Government.

We were honoured that the Friends of Human Security could be represented in Dublin by the Ambassador of Japan to Ireland and were also pleased to welcome the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Ireland chose to focus on the priority theme of gender-based violence for our HSN Chairmanship and in line with this theme we were honoured to also host an International Conference on 26 May 2009 on the theme 'How can the HSN promote the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security?'. The Conference brought together representatives of the members of the Network, as well as Irish and international experts on the topic. NGO and civil society organisations also took part in the discussions.

Mr Peter Power, Minister of State for Overseas Development at the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, delivered a keynote address which emphasised the need for the international community to act to bring an end to gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as stressing the importance of the involvement of women at all levels of peace-making and peace-building. The Government of Ireland Special Envoy on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Dame Nuala O'Loan, also addressed the Conference and facilitated one of the panel discussions.

Expert panellists at the Conference covered a wide range of topics including protection and prevention from gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict, the participation of women in peace-building and peace-making, and how to promote the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820. HSN members reiterated their commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 and provided updates on their national activities on the issue of women, peace and security. Ireland is in the process of preparing a report of the Conference, which we hope to be able to circulate to HSN and Friends of Human Security colleagues in the near future.

In conclusion, so many of the varied challenges facing us in the world today can be said to have a human security perspective. In addressing these challenges, we have seen the benefits of a human-centred and practical approach which is the hallmark of the Human Security Network. Ireland is delighted to have been able to make a contribution to the work of the Network and the cause of human security during our Chairmanship and I would like to thank the Friends of Human Security for their cooperation and assistance during this period.

The collaborative and constructive dialogue that is the mark of the relationship between the HSN and the Friends of Human Security is testimony to our shared commitment to human security. We are confident that this relationship can be further developed to our mutual benefit. We have handed the Chairmanship to Costa Rica and in doing so we can be confident that the stewardship of the Network is in capable hands.