

**Oral statement to the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the Human Rights Council**

**Item 2: General Debate**

**13 September 2022**

**Speaker:** Phil Lynch

Mr President, Deputy High Commissioner,

We welcome the release of the OHCHR report concluding that Chinese authorities have committed grave human rights violations against Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim communities that may amount to crimes against humanity.

Through rigorous methodology and extensive evidence, and in view of its mandate to protect and promote all human rights for all, the Office documents a range of serious abuses – from ‘far-reaching discriminatory restrictions,’ to large-scale arbitrary detention and sexual and gender-based violence. It identifies China’s ‘deeply problematic’ anti-terrorism laws and policies, which conflate certain ‘religious or cultural practice or expression...with extremism’, as a root cause of these and other violations.

The report also notes intimidation and threats that transcend borders, as well as the devastating impact of enforced disappearances on those left without knowledge of their family members’ health, whereabouts or freedom; people like Ziba Murat who told us that she will continue to speak up until she sees her mother, prominent Uyghur doctor Gulshan Abbas, released, in her arms, and able to hug her grandchildren.

Faced with overwhelming evidence, and in line with this Council’s mandate and objective criteria for action, ISHR calls on all States to support the establishment of an independent international mechanism to monitor and report on human rights in China and promote accountability for violations.

With the OHCHR report highlighting that ‘the conditions remain in place for serious violations to continue and recur’, the time for the Council to act is now.

Thank you.