



1. Chair

2. Ireland agrees itself with the statement delivered by the European Union

3. Ireland has been very supportive of the consideration of the needs of the victims of the destruction of persons in the event of disasters over the many

International Law Commission for its efforts.

4. We have long emphasised the value of considering this subject, and of developing a legal framework for the more effective protection of persons in the event of disasters

as providing guidance to states. The events of the 1970 and 1980 year, together with the

to the urgent need to address international cooperation for the victims of such disasters

is from floods or droughts, earthquakes or wildfires, all states are asked to

themselves in a position of possibly needing the assistance of other states, or of other states to respond

disasters. The severity and frequency of such events is increasing, and it is

5. It is in this context that we welcome the work of the Commission on International Law

to ensure that impediments to the provision of assistance are removed

lifted, and that those not affected are not suffering unnecessarily from the

so far as possible. From the early discussions on this topic, it has been stressed the need

to make concrete progress on the technical and legal aspects of disaster relief

underpin and facilitate disaster relief.

6. We welcome the balance struck by the draft Article 2 on the basis of a

and a needs-based approach for the victims of disasters, in the

Article 2 on the importance of the need to meet the needs of the

needs of the affected persons, in a manner that respects their

the principal focus of the draft Article 2 on the need to meet the

of disaster relief. It will remain the case

affected by disasters must continue to be respected in all circumstances.

reflected in any future instrument, whether in operative provisions or in introductory language – is a matter for further consideration.

7. The current international legal framework on disaster response is fragmented and we commend the efforts made to bring clarity and consistency through these draft Articles. Even though the definition of 'disaster' is not uniform, the definition in Article 3 and the requirement of serious disruption to 'the functioning of society' that forms part of the applicability of the Articles is somewhat unclear. Does 'society' apply to a whole state only, or can a region within a state, or indeed a cross-border area, be considered a 'society' for the purposes of the application of the Articles? We are inclined to lean towards to maintain flexibility but caution that this lack of clarity may lead to debates in instances where speedy disaster response would be more appropriate.

8. We welcome in particular the reference to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This is fitting considering the efforts undertaken by the Movement to address disaster relief, and the valuable practical experience it has gained through its response over the years.

9. We acknowledge that the elaboration of a formal convention on the basis of the draft Articles would bring clarity to the field of international disaster law. We however recommend a cautious approach, particularly where the draft Articles are not new law, rather than simply facilitate the efficient delivery of assistance on the basis of existing principles. In this regard, we are minded whether the most appropriate format would be a treaty, indeed a convention, or whether further consideration should be given to alternatives such as guidelines.

10. Either way, we welcome the discussion over the next number of days and will endeavour to engage with a view to establishing a well-defined position and filling the gaps in this important legal area that has the potential to assist many persons in their time of greatest need.

11. Thank you.