

A cairde, is mór an onóir dom labhairt thar ceann na hÉireann inniu.

(Friends, I am honoured to speak on behalf of Ireland today).

I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak as a Young Parliamentarian from Ireland today.

The Irish Constitution contains a commitment to the rule of international law and this is one of the core principles of Irish foreign policy.

During our term as an elected member of the UN Security Council from 2021-2022, Ireland consistently called for compliance with International Humanitarian Law and accountability for IHL violations.

The persistent problem for IHL is the frequent failure by some States to respect the existing rules. Unfortunately, there is a very concerning trend of seeking to interpret the rules so loosely that their intended protective effect is either severely reduced or nullified. Ireland is concerned by these trends and is firmly committed to the implementation of IHL and to efforts to strengthen compliance with it. Ireland would like to see the interpretation of IHL continue to adapt to react to new developments in armed conflict, including the use of drones and cyber-attacks in conflict zones.

We are seeking to strengthen and promote adherence to IHL within Ireland as well as abroad and our National Committee on IHL has continued to meet regularly. The National Committee provides an effective means of promoting wider knowledge of IHL within the State system and we are currently in the process of preparing its first voluntary national report on the domestic implementation of IHL.

As part of this exercise, in July 2023 Ireland published a national position paper on the application of international law to cyberspace. We strongly feel

that cyber operations which take place in the context of armed conflict be regulated by IHL.

International Humanitarian Law must grow and evolve to match developments in armed conflict, we must ensure we have a robust legal structure in place both to ensure justice after the fact, and to act as a deterrent against future harm.

In Ireland, we have had a successful peace process which we believe can be another example to other regions in conflict. There is still much more to be done in terms of reconciliation and we are striving to end partition of our country and to secure a united Ireland but this can only be achieved peacefully and that again shows the power of respectful dialogue.

Let us our voices for peace and justice and not be afraid to call out violations on international law and make sure that there is accountability for all who violate.

Go raibh míle maith agat agus saoirse don Phalaistín.

(Thank you and Freedom for Palestine).