

Human Rights Council 38th session

Joint Statement on the Human Rights Situation in the Philippines

General Debate - Item 2

19 June 2018

Delivered by Iceland

Thank you Mr. President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of a group of 38 States.

The Philippines is a current member of the Human Rights Council. States which are elected to join the Council should lead by example and are expected to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights during their time as members. The Human Rights Council has a responsibility to fulfill its duty to promote universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner. If needed, the Council may take further steps, including a more formal Council initiative to try and ensure that member states meet their human rights obligations.

While acknowledging that drug use in the Philippines is a serious problem, actions to tackle drug abuse must be carried out in full respect of the rule of law and compliance with international human rights obligations. We urge the government of the Philippines to take all necessary measures to bring killings associated with the campaign against illegal drugs to an end and cooperate with the international community to investigate all related deaths and hold perpetrators accountable.

We are also concerned over reports of harassment of persons exercising their rights to freedom of opinion and expression, including human rights defenders and journalists. We are also concerned about the harassment of members of the

Commission on Human Rights. We call upon the Philippines to provide and guarantee a safe and secure environment for all, including journalists and Human Rights defenders.

Mr. President,

We are encouraged by reports that the Government of the Philippines has indicated a willingness to cooperate with the UN to allow an objective assessment of the human rights situation in the country.

We urge the Government of the Philippines to cooperate with the United Nations system - including the Human Rights Council and its special procedure mandate holders - without preconditions or limitations.

I thank you