



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN GENEVA

HRC 52 – Item 3 - Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders 15 March 2023

Statement by H.E. Christopher Grima, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta to the UN and Other International Organisations in Geneva

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Thank you, Mr. President,

Malta aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union and thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report.

Malta remains concerned by the widespread human rights violations against Human Rights Defenders (HRDs), who are often targeted simply because of their work and face reprisals. These risks increase considerably when they happen to be women, LGBTI persons or environmental and indigenous peoples' defenders. Despite this, we are pleased to note that HRDs persevere and achieve great success in various fields.

We fully agree with the Special Rapporteur that the work of HRDs must be recognised and celebrated publicly, and that public training and awareness-raising processes are needed to better enable understanding and respect for their work.

HRDs are agents for positive change and development and are key in protecting against human rights violations and in advancing human rights. They deserve greater engagement from us, the international community, to address the risks and threats they face and to support them in strengthening their capacity.

To conclude, I wish to ask the Special Rapporteur whether she can share any good practices in HRD protection from recent visits.

Thank you.