



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the Office of the United Nations and
to the other International Organizations
Geneva

36th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Geneva, 20 September 2017

**Item 5 – Human Rights bodies and mechanisms: Cooperation
with the UN**

German Statement

Mr. President,

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union.

Mr. Gilmour,

Germany welcomes your designation and thanks you for your important report. State strategies to use reprisals to prevent individuals from providing information to the United Nations are alarming.

We are deeply concerned by the growing number of acts of intimidation and reprisal. Such acts gravely impact the lives of the concerned individuals and their families and foster a climate of fear detrimental to civil society participation. This undermines the trust in the United Nations and harms the functioning of the UN system as a whole and in particular the human rights mechanisms. Intimidation and reprisals contribute to shrinking civil society space, silence relevant voices in debates and deprive us all from the vital contributions civil society has to offer.

In this context, we note with deep concern that only recently Egyptian authorities detained the lawyer Mr. Ebrahim Metwally Hegazy to prevent him from travelling to a session of the UN working group on enforced disappearances.

Germany strongly supports the draft resolution on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights presented to this council.

Germany will continue to support efforts to create and maintain a safe and enabling civil society space, also within the United Nations and here at the Human Rights Council. Germany calls on all states to do the same. We have a collective, charter-based responsibility to respond to and prevent acts of reprisals and intimidation. As international community we must address cases of reprisal in a coherent and systematic manner. Within the Human Rights Council the President and the bureau can contribute to this goal by taking all necessary measures to prevent acts of intimidation and reprisals and to ensure full accountability for such cases.

Thank you, Mr. President.