**Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association**

47th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

1 July 2021

*Statement on behalf of the Core Group*

*of the Resolution establishing the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur*

Madam President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of Indonesia, Lithuania, Maldives, Mexico, the United States of America and the Czech Republic, the Core Group for Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association.

At the outset, the Core Group would like to express its full support to the work of the Mandate and its independence. We acknowledge the Mandate’s active cooperation with diverse stakeholders that has for instance contributed to the Human Rights Committee’s General Comment No. 37.

In response to the Special Rapporteur’s recent statements, the Core Group notes with concern measures introduced in some States due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We call upon all Governments to ensure that their responses to the pandemic are in full compliance with their human rights obligations and commitments

Mr Special Rapporteur,

We would like to thank you for your Reports.

The Core Group fully concurs with the conclusion that access to justice is an integral element of the protection of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and that it has a crucial role for upholding the rule of law.

We encourage States to take specific steps at the domestic level to ensure access to justice and fight against impunity, in particular for killings of protesters and for repression of peaceful protests.

The Report recommends that the Human Rights Council supports engagement of lawyers in the protection of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association. In your opinion, what specific steps could the Council take in this regard?

Thank you.