

Statement of Action European Women's Lobby – Item 6 – Universal Periodic Review – Ireland – Adoption of UPR outcome on Ireland - March 15th 2012

Madame President,

The **Women's Human Rights Alliance** is a coalition of human rights organisations and individuals promoting the human rights of women in Ireland.

1. We welcome the Irish Governments' acceptance of a number of important recommendations from the UPR hearing in October 2011.

1.1 We are, however, greatly concerned by the rejection of six recommendations¹ on Ireland's restrictive regulation of abortion. These recommendations echo the criticisms made by three UN treaty bodies² and the recent call by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health to decriminalize abortion³. Their rejection casts serious doubt on Ireland's commitment to women's reproductive health rights.

2. We are gravely concerned that in accepting the Thai recommendation⁴ for a statutory inquiry and compensation scheme for women and children victims of abuse, there is no mention of the women survivors of Ireland's Magdalene Laundries who have been denied reparation⁵.

2.1 We call on the Government to comply with the recommendations of the UN Committee against Torture⁶ and the Irish Human Rights Commission⁷ to institute a statutory inquiry and compensation scheme for the Magdalene Laundries abuse.

3. We are concerned at the Irish Governments response⁸ to Austria's recommendation for "full implementation and an independent assessment of **The National Women's Strategy**⁹".

¹ A/HRC/19/9 21 December 2011 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland; 108.4, 108.5, 108.6, 108.7, 108.8, 108.9

² UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) "Concluding Comments Ireland", CEDAW/C/IRL/CO/4-5 2005; United Nations Committee against Torture, 46th session 9 May – 3 June 2011 Concluding Observations : Ireland; CAT/C/IRL/CO/1, 17 June 2011 Human Rights Committee 93rd Session, July 2008: Concluding Observations to Ireland

³ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health (A/66/254) 24 October 2011

⁴ A/HRC/19/9 21 December 2011 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland; 107.40

⁵ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 6 March 2012 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland Addendum 107.40. 52.

⁶ Committee against Torture Forty-sixth session 9 May-3 June 2011, Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention, Concluding observations of the Committee against Torture CAT/C/IRL/CO/1

⁷ Irish Human Rights Commission Assessment of the Human Rights Issues Arising in relation to the "Magdalen Laundries" November 2010
http://www.ihrc.ie/download/pdf/ihrc_assessment_of_the_human_rights_issues_arising_in_relation_to_the_magdalen_laundries_nov_2010.pdf

⁸ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 6 March 2012 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland Addendum; 107.23. 31. 32.

3.1 We acknowledge the current internal Government review¹⁰, but believe that an independent non governmental review would enhance the Strategy in the current economic crisis, identifying the measures required to advance women's human rights.

4. We welcome Government's acceptance in principle of **The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**¹¹ and urge Government to sign the convention as recommended by Austria¹² and implement it as a matter of urgency.

5. France recommended a **gender parity** law to increase women's representation in politics¹³. We welcome the legislation on candidate quotas¹⁴ but believe the quotas are un-ambitious. The Constitutional Convention should be tasked with implementing gender sensitive reform of Irish political structures.

Thank you

This statement is supported by:

- ✚ AkiDWA
- ✚ Banulacht
- ✚ Cáirde
- ✚ Dublin Rape Crisis Centre
- ✚ Irish Family Planning Association
- ✚ Immigrant Council of Ireland
- ✚ Justice for Magdalenes
- ✚ Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
- ✚ National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks
- ✚ National Traveller Women's Forum
- ✚ National Women's Council of Ireland
- ✚ OPEN
- ✚ Pavee Point Travellers Centre
- ✚ Women's Aid

⁹ A/HRC/19/9 21 December 2011 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland; 107.23

¹⁰ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 6 March 2012 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland Addendum; 107.23 32

¹¹ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 6 March 2012 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland Addendum; 107.37. 48.

¹² A/HRC/19/9 21 December 2011 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland; 107.37

¹³ A/HRC/19/9 21 December 2011 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland; 107.14

¹⁴ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 6 March 2012 Human Rights Council Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Ireland Addendum; 107.14 22.