



Check against delivery

Oral Statement of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to the United Nations Human Rights Council Adoption of the Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review for Ireland 23 September 2016

We thank the Human Rights Council for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of Ireland's 'A' Status national human rights institution.¹

Progress since last Universal Periodic Review

The Universal Periodic Review has been the subject of extensive discussion within the Irish State and it is encouraging to see how the process has gained momentum and standing since Ireland's first round examination in 2011.

The Commission welcomes the progress that Ireland has made in this time, including two significant referendums to amend the Irish Constitution, on the rights of the child and on marriage equality. We reiterate our calls for further constitutional reform on the role of women in Irish society, blasphemy and the guarantee of equality.

International Obligations

The Commission welcomes the commitment by the Irish Government to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. We remain concerned at the length of time between signature and ratification of the CRPD, the Council of Europe 'Istanbul Convention' and the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture.

¹ The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is Ireland's 'A' status national human rights institution, established under statute in 2014. The oral statement is delivered by Chief Commissioner, Ms Emily Logan.



Policies and Measures

We welcome acceptance by the State of the recommendation concerning **prison conditions** but regret that the important issue of **recognition of Traveller ethnicity** has not been progressed since Ireland's first Universal Periodic Review in 2011. We note the partial acceptance of a number of recommendations concerning the **protection of refugees and asylum seekers**. We have recommended reform of the protection process including direct provision be advanced as a matter of priority. We note the commitment to a review of the identification mechanism for potential **victims of trafficking** and we continue to be concerned at the delays in bringing about the changes required in this regard. We note and welcome the acceptance of several recommendations around **racial discrimination**.

The Commission remains concerned that the current **legal position in relation to abortion** puts in place barriers which impede a woman's right to bodily autonomy and has a disproportionate negative impact on certain groups of women.

Conclusion

The Commission welcomes the commitments that the Government has made in respect of the recommendations it has accepted. We now request the Government provide comprehensive information on its plans for implementation of these recommendations.

We refer the Council to our longer written statement for more detail on the above matters.

Thank you.

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