



AN COIMISIÚN UM CHEARTA AN DUINE

## **Statement of the Irish Human Rights Commission (National Human Rights Institution) to the Human Rights Council**

### **On the occasion of the Mid-Term Review of Ireland under the Universal Periodic Review**

**21 March 2014**

This Statement is delivered on behalf of the A status Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC), Ireland's Human Rights Institution. The IHRC understands that Ireland will in due course provide an update in relation to progress on implementing the UPR recommendations. The IHRC welcomes the opportunity to present this statement today in advance of that update.

The IHRC acknowledges progress made by the State in respect of certain recommendations, but is concerned that insufficient progress is being made in others including the following:

- While, we welcome the imminent publication of the draft legislation for the establishment of the new Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, we also hope to see a degree of urgency in having the legislation enacted.
- We welcome the recent government announcement of a referendum on the issue but note that the Irish Constitution continues to perpetuate stereotypical attitudes towards the role of women and that the constitutional protection from discrimination is unduly limited.
- There has been no progress on providing a consolidated legislative framework in relation to immigration and asylum issues.
- A number of key human rights Conventions have not been ratified, most significantly the UNCRPD and OPCAT.
- The State has not taken steps to recognise Travellers as an ethnic minority, and outcomes remain poor for the Traveller community overall.
- There are no proposals from the State regarding the introduction of a National Action Plan for Human Rights; a National Action Plan for Human Rights Education and Training, nor an updated National Action Plan Against Racism.
- While there has been a reduction in the prison population, poor hygiene facilities and overcrowding continue to be a feature of Irish Prisons, and there is no Prisoner Ombudsman to independently adjudicate on complaints.
- Migrant workers, particularly women are vulnerable to abuse in the labour market, and reform of the work permit system that ties workers to named employers, increases this vulnerability.

- The State has not ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, a key instrument to addressing this problem, particularly in the area of service provision.

Thank you Mr President.

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