

Universal Periodic Review-25th cycle (2 – 13 May 2016)

Review of Samoa Statement by Ireland

3 May 2016

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Samoa and thanks it for its presentation.

We commend positive developments since the first UPR cycle, including ratification of human rights treaties and issuance of a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. We further welcome the strengthening of the Office of Ombudsman, with the intention of creation of a national human rights institution. We trust these institutional developments will contribute to ever-improving protection of the human rights in Samoa.

We appreciate the challenges, including lack of resources, faced by Samoa in progressing further on human rights. We additionally recognise the challenge faced in addressing the effects of climate change.

Ireland **recommends** that Samoa ratify the remaining core human rights treaties, in particular the ICESCR, the Convention against Torture, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; as well as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

While we recognise positive steps taken, including the School Fees Grant Scheme and establishment of a working group on child labour, we urge additional attention to children's rights. We regret the dropout rates between primary and secondary level education, particularly for girls noted by CEDAW; and echo the concerns of the ILO at the persistence of child labour including child street vendors. We **recommend** that Samoa amend its laws to prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings and circumstances; and take further steps to eradicate child labour and guarantee the right to education of all children.

Finally, we are concerned that same sex relations between consenting adults remain criminalised and at the persistence of discrimination and stigmatisation. We strongly urge Samoa to decriminalise consensual same-sex relations and to adopt initiatives to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of LGBTI persons.

Thank you