

**31st session of the Universal Periodic Review  
Review of Central African Republic (CAR)  
Statement of Ireland  
9th November 2018**

Ireland welcomes the delegation from Central African Republic and we commend the progress made since the last cycle, including the ratification of several international human rights treaties.

We are also pleased to note the adoption of a new constitution in 2016 that guarantees freedom of association for all citizens. However, Ireland is concerned about reports of harassment, intimidation and attacks on civil society, journalists and human rights defenders by armed groups. Ireland recommends that the authorities ensure a safe environment for human rights defenders, journalists and other civil society actors by investigating all allegations of ill-treatment and by adopting the draft Bill on the protection of human rights defenders.

Ireland remains concerned by reports of sexual and gender-based violence, especially reports of rape, aggression, sexual slavery, forced marriage and the abduction of women and girls by armed groups and civilians. Ireland recommends that the Central African Republic develop and implement a national strategy on sexual violence, while also ensuring that all relevant state authorities are trained in how to respond to, investigate, and prosecute cases of sexual violence against women.

We wish Central African Republic every success in this UPR cycle.

Thank you.