

DRAFT
27th session of the Universal Periodic Review (1 – 12 May 2017)

Review of Finland

Statement by Ireland

3 May 2017

Mr. President

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Finland and thanks it for its report and presentation today.

We commend Finland for its very high standard of human rights protection domestically and its consistent backing for international human rights institutions, including through regular and strong support, including financial support for OHCHR, UN Women and others.

We welcome other progress on human rights since the last review, including in particular passage of legislation permitting same sex marriage, as of March 2017. We particularly appreciate the inclusive process undertaken by Finland in preparation of its national report and its commitment to again submit a mid-term review of progress in implementation of UPR recommendations in this 3rd cycle.

However, like CEDAW and CAT we are concerned that in order for transsexual persons to secure recognition of their gender, the Act on Legal Recognition of the Gender of Transsexuals requires the person concerned to be sterilised or infertile for other reasons. Ireland **recommends** that Finland amend its laws to remove the requirement for sterilisation or infertility before recognition of the gender of transsexual persons and further, to consider moving to a process allowing persons to self-declare their gender identity.

Finally, we note that Finland has indicated a status of ‘implementation in progress’ for a number of recommendations from the 2nd UPR cycle, including that of ensuring that rape is categorised as a sexual violation rather than according to the degree of violence involved and to facilitate access to justice for victims of rape. We welcome in that regard the significant amendment of sexual offences legislation since the last cycle. Ireland **recommends** that Finland continue its efforts in the process of implementation of accepted recommendations from the second cycle and consider sharing good practices in that regard.

Thank you