

Universal Periodic Review – 23rd session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Saint Kitts and Nevis 11 November 2015

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Saint Kitts and Nevis and thanks it for presentation of its report.

Ireland commends Saint Kitts and Nevis for positive steps taken since its last review including the establishment of a special victims unit within the police force to deal with domestic violence and campaigns carried out by the Department of Gender Affairs to counter sexual violence. However, we remain concerned that the law does not cover marital rape and that there are no shelters for victims of domestic violence. We urge Saint Kitts and Nevis to amend its laws to criminalise marital rape and establish and maintain shelters for victims of domestic violence. We further urge Saint Kitts and Nevis to amend its laws to decriminalise libel and defamation and to provide for freedom of information.

We are concerned that although no death sentence has been imposed in Saint Kitts and Nevis since 2008, the death penalty is still provided for under the law. We urge Saint Kitts and Nevis to take concrete steps towards the abolition of the death penalty including by an immediate formal moratorium on its use.

We regret that Saint Kitts and Nevis has failed to ratify any of the core United Nations human rights instruments since its 2011 review. Ireland **recommends** that Saint Kitts and Nevis take immediate steps, including if necessary requesting relevant technical assistance in that regard, to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and other core human rights treaties.

Ireland is concerned regarding reports that discrimination and acts of violence continue to occur against persons because of their sexual orientation. We **recommend** that Saint Kitts and Nevis decriminalise consensual adult same-sex relations by amending sections 56 and 57 of the Offences against the Person Act and take all necessary steps to ensure the enjoyment of their rights by all persons without discrimination on grounds of sexual orientations or gender identity.