

Universal Periodic Review – 23rd session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Georgia

10 November 2015

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Georgia and thanks it for the presentation of its report. We also thank Georgia for the submission of a voluntary mid-term report on the implementation of recommendations from its first-cycle review, and for responding to the great majority of communications received from the special procedures mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council. We note with satisfaction that Georgia has extended a standing invitation to special procedures mandate-holders to visit the country, and has received several visits since the first-cycle review.

While acknowledging the progress made in recent years, we note that concerns continue to be expressed, including by UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies and special procedures, regarding prison conditions. Ireland **recommends** that Georgia ensure that instances of ill-treatment of prisoners and detainees are eliminated and that proper and thorough investigations are conducted in such situations in order to hold perpetrators accountable.

We also note that concerns exist regarding the administration of justice. For example, the 2013-2014 OSCE-ODIHR trial monitoring project highlighted a number of problematic practices, including the use of pre-trial detention as a preventive measure; lack of transparency on judicial appointments and transfers of judges; lack of effective rules of evidence; ineffective protection of witnesses; timeliness of trials; reasoning of judicial decisions; the conduct of trials in absentia; and issues related to the presumption of innocence. Ireland notes the steps taken to address these concerns and **recommends** that Georgia undertake a comprehensive review of arrangements for the appointment, training and transfer of judges, with a view to ensuring their independence and their full understanding and application of human rights obligations.