

**31st session of the Universal Periodic Review**  
**Review of Congo**  
**Statement of Ireland**  
**14th November 2018**

Thank you, Mr. (Vice) President.

Ireland welcomes the delegation from Congo and thanks it for its presentation today.

Ireland welcomes the progress made since the last UPR cycle, including the ratification of several international human rights treaties.

We note that Congo's National Human Rights Commission still does not meet the criteria for "A" status and so we urge the Government to reinforce the mandate of the Commission in line with the standards required by the Paris Principles.

Ireland is concerned by reports of a crackdown on civil society space in the Congo and, recalling our recommendation in the last cycle, we recommend that the Congolese authorities take all necessary measures to promote and protect a safe and enabling environment in which both civil society and human rights defenders can operate free from fear, hindrance and insecurity

Ireland commends Congo for abolishing the death penalty, however, we are concerned that the Criminal Code has not yet been changed to reflect the new constitutional ban.

Ireland recommends that Congo introduce legislation to remove any reference to the death penalty in the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure and to ratify as soon as possible the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.

We wish Congo every success in this UPR cycle.

Thank you.