

**Human Rights Council - 28<sup>th</sup> session**  
(3<sup>rd</sup> March – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015)

**Biennial high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty**  
**“Regional efforts aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and challenges faced in that regard”**

Wednesday, 4 March 2015

**Statement by Ireland**

Mr President,

Ireland is opposed to the use of the death penalty in all cases and in all circumstances. The death penalty is irreversible and irreparable in nature. Ireland is a long-standing opponent of the death penalty and is one of the few countries in which the electorate voted to insert an article in the Constitution explicitly forbidding use of the death penalty.

The 2014 General Assembly resolution on a Moratorium on the use of the death penalty was adopted with a stronger text and an unprecedented number of votes in favour. Ireland supported the inclusion of new language calling upon States not to impose capital punishment on persons with mental or intellectual disabilities.

Ireland notes with deep concern the recent cases of States resuming the application of the death penalty as well as the rise in executions in other countries, including for drug-related crimes. While restating our strong opposition to the death penalty and advocating for its full abolition, Ireland insists that those States that still maintain executions respect the right of the accused to a fair trial and due process, do not impose capital punishment on persons below 18 years of age at the time of the commission of their crime, on pregnant women, new mothers and nursing women, persons suffering from any mental illness or having an intellectual disability and the elderly.

We want to take this occasion to underscore that there is no compelling evidence to show that the death penalty serves as a deterrent to crime and that any miscarriage of justice could lead to the intentional killing of an innocent person by state authorities.

*As highlighted during the high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty on 5 March 2014, initiatives taken at the regional level are more likely to be accepted by countries from the same geographical area; how can regional systems best contribute to strengthen the respect of and to increase the number of accessions to the moratorium by countries under their jurisdiction.*