

Universal Periodic Review working group – 19th session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Portugal

30 April 2014

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

Ireland commends the efforts of Portugal to implement its first cycle recommendations. We note that the preparation of the national report was led by the Portuguese National Human Rights Committee which was established in 2010 pursuant to a commitment made during the first cycle of the UPR. In this light, we would be interested in further detail on the nature of the regular interactions between this Committee and civil society, which is referenced in the national report. In addition, we welcome that improving the participation of civil society in the process of protecting and promoting human rights is mentioned in the national report as a priority for the future.

Ireland welcomes the measures initiated by Portugal to address discrimination against children in all its forms, as detailed in its national report. We take note of the concerns recently expressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child that, despite this considerable action, instances of discrimination in practice continue. Ireland **recommends** that Portugal continue its efforts to ensure that all children enjoy equal rights without discrimination.

Ireland notes with concern that defamation remains a criminal offence under the Portuguese criminal code. We consider the criminalisation of defamation to be a disproportionate restriction on freedom of expression. Therefore, Ireland **recommends** that Portugal decriminalise defamation and place it under the civil code in accordance with international standards.