

Universal Periodic Review working group – 20th session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Bosnia and Herzegovina

5 November 2014

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and thanks it for its national report and for its presentation today.

We note a number of positive developments since the last review, including the adoption of the Action Plan for Children (2011-2014) and of a National Action Plan pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1325, as well as the issuing of a standing invitation to the special procedures mandate-holders of this Council.

While acknowledging the complexity of the State structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we note with concern that a number of treaty monitoring bodies have commented that there is limited cooperation between bodies whose responsibilities include issues such as gender equality and children's rights, and that the implementation of policies such as the Action Plan for Children is constrained by the country's highly fragmented administrative system. We therefore **recommend** that Bosnia and Herzegovina take measures to improve cooperation and coordination of activities among bodies at all levels which have a role to play in the promotion and protection of human rights.

A key element of post-conflict reconciliation is to ensure justice for victims of violations and abuses of human rights. We are concerned at the low rate of prosecutions and low conviction rate of alleged perpetrators of acts of violence, especially sexual violence, against civilians during the conflict. We **recommend** that Bosnia and Herzegovina thoroughly investigate acts of sexual violence committed during the conflict, with a view to holding perpetrators to account, ensure reparation and full reintegration into society of victims of wartime rape and other sexual violence, and take action to counter any manifestations of stigma and exclusion directed against them.