

Universal Periodic Review working group – 20th session

Statement by Ireland on the review of the Gambia

28 October 2014

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

We welcome positive efforts undertaken by Gambia since its first UPR.

We strongly encourage the Gambia to extend a standing invitation to all Special Procedures to assist the Gambia in its efforts, as well as to ensure that the new national human rights institution when established is fully compliant with the Paris Principles. We also strongly urge the Gambia to re-instate a moratorium on the death penalty, with a view to its abolition.

We note the statement in the Gambia's National Report that the rights and activities of human rights defenders are recognised and protected by law. However, we are very concerned by reports of arrests, arbitrary detention, intimidation and harassment of defenders. Ireland **recommends** that the Gambia create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment, in which human rights defenders can operate free from hindrance and insecurity, in accordance with Human Rights Council Resolution 22/6.

Ireland recognises gains made by the Gambia in addressing child mortality and morbidity. However, we note that rates of child mortality remain high due to major challenges in some areas such as, lack of access to health care and services, safe drinking water and sanitation. We also note reports that the nutrition status of children under 5 has deteriorated over the past 5 years. Ireland **recommends** that the Gambia take action at all levels to address the interlinked root causes of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 and consider applying the “Technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age”, A/HRC/27/31.