

Universal Periodic Review working group – 20th session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Iraq

3 November 2014

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

Ireland welcomes the progress made by Iraq in the reduction of infant and under-five mortality rates and encourages continued efforts in that regard.

Ireland notes the grave security threat facing Iraq's religious minorities. While we acknowledge Iraq's Constitutional provision of equal rights for religious minorities, we are deeply concerned by gaps in implementation, and reports of displacement and persecution of minority communities. Ireland **recommends** that Iraq endeavours to protect the security and rights of persons belonging to minorities, bring to justice individuals and organisations that violate their rights, and ensure fair and proportional representation of all minorities in security apparatuses, governance and decision-making bodies at regional and federal levels.

Ireland is concerned by Article 128 of the Iraqi Penal Code, which identifies commission of an offence with honourable motives as a mitigating excuse, as this can lead to the denigration of the status of women and girls. Ireland **recommends** suspension of Article 128 of the Iraqi Penal Code, as a first step towards the permanent removal from it of honourable motives as a mitigating excuse.