

Universal Periodic Review working group – 20th session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Kazakhstan

30 October 2014

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

We note a number of positive developments since Kazakhstan's first review, including the accreditation of Kazakhstan's national human rights institution, the Commissioner for Human Rights, with B status. We encourage Kazakhstan to seek to attain A status for its national human rights institution, indicating full compliance with the Paris Principles.

We commend Kazakhstan for having in place a standing invitation to special procedures mandate-holders and for receiving several visits of mandate-holders during the period since its last review, as well as a visit by the former High Commissioner for Human Rights. We hope that the visits of the Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights Defenders and on Freedom of Association and Assembly, to which Kazakhstan has agreed in principle, can take place at an early date.

We note that both the Human Rights Committee and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion have expressed concern about aspects of the law governing religious activities. Ireland **recommends** that Kazakhstan undertake a thorough review of the 2011 Law on Religious Associations with a view to ensuring its compliance with Kazakhstan's international obligations.

We further **recommend** that Kazakhstan implement accepted UPR recommendations on the decriminalisation of defamation, and repeal provisions of the Criminal Code on the defamation of public officials and of the Law on the Leader of the Nation, which introduced a new article into the Criminal Code prohibiting and punishing insults against the honour of the President.