

**27th session of the Universal Periodic Review (1 – 12 May 2017)**

**Statement by Ireland on the review of Algeria**

**8 May 2017**

Mr. President

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Algeria and thanks it for its national report and its presentation today. Ireland welcomes progress made since the last review, in particular the constitutional amendments adopted in February 2016. We urge Algeria to expand on this progress by further cooperating with UN human rights mechanisms and in particular by extending a standing invitation to the Special Procedures and accepting outstanding visit requests.

Ireland welcomes amendments to the penal code specifically criminalizing domestic violence. However we urge Algeria to withdraw its reservation under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. We urge Algeria to repeal legislation criminalising same-sex relations, amend provisions in the Penal Code and Family Code that discriminate on the basis of gender, and introduce legislation to combat discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

We recall the 7 previous UPR recommendations made in the 2<sup>nd</sup> UPR cycle in relation to the death penalty and **recommend** that Algeria take all necessary measures be taken to formally abolish the death penalty, including ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and further to ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC.

Underlining the vital role of freedom of expression, assembly and association, we urge Algeria to take steps to create and maintain a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders and civil society. In that regard, we **recommend** that Algeria lift restrictions on the registration of associations and the right to freedom of assembly, revise articles of the Penal Code in order to decriminalise defamation, to ensure compliance with the ICCPR; adopt a framework to protect journalists from intimidation and harassment, and implement the best practices on freedom of peaceful assembly put forward by the Special Rapporteur.

Ireland is deeply concerned by the absence of a comprehensive legal framework for refugees and asylum-seekers which is leading to legal uncertainty and the deprivation of basic rights of refugees in Algeria. We strongly urge Algeria to adopt a legal framework for asylum, by fully implementing its international obligations under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees into its domestic legal framework. In particular we urge Algeria to grant and recognise refugee status by issuing national documentation to all persons within the mandate of the UNHCR.

Thank you