

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

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

**8 May 2017**

Mr. President

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

We appreciate the traditional record that the Philippines has had of commitment to human rights, demonstrated by its ratification of the majority of core human rights treaties and engagement at the Council. We note improvements in relation to the right to education; and acknowledge the challenges faced by the Philippines, including terrorism and climate change.

However we regret that a large number of 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle accepted recommendations have not been implemented and are deeply concerned at developments including a marked deterioration in the rule of law in the Philippines since the last review.

We first remind that, having ratified the 2<sup>nd</sup> Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, it is impermissible to reintroduce the death penalty in the Philippines. We share the deeply concerns of a number of Treaty Bodies and the UN Country Team regarding perpetration of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances and the prevalence of torture.

Ireland **recommends** that the Philippines cease all steps to reintroduce the death penalty, contrary to its obligations under the OP to the ICCPR; urgently accept a visit from the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, without preconditions or limitations; fully investigate and prosecute all cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances; take immediate steps to combat torture in the criminal justice system, including torture in police stations to extract confessions; and fully respect international human rights law in its efforts to combat the trade in and use of illegal drugs.

We share the concerns of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regarding harassment, intimidation, threats and killings of human rights defenders and are dismayed at public statements, including by senior officials, which threaten or appear to support the murder of journalists, HRDs or other members of civil society, and thereby contribute to growing impunity.

We **recommend** that the Philippines take urgent steps to create and maintain in law and in practice a safe and enabling environment for civil society and human rights defenders, including by acknowledging publicly their important and legitimate role of in the promotion of human rights, democracy and rule of law; simplifying the process to form associations; applying the good practices set out in HRC resolution 32/31; and to request and accept technical assistance including from OHCHR to fulfil these commitments.

Further, we urge the Philippines to take urgent action in relation to children's rights. We urge the Philippines to reconsider proposals to lower the age of criminal responsibility to 9 years of age; to implement accepted recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment; to urgently raise the age of consent from 12 to at least 16 years as recommended by CEDAW; and to intensify efforts to reduce and eradicate child labour.

Finally we urge the Philippines to take concrete steps to protect LGBTI persons from discrimination and violence, including through enactment of explicit non-discrimination provision in law, development of public awareness programmes and to allow for recognition of the gender of transsexual persons.

Thank you