

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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Ireland: Amnesty International welcomes the commitments to respect economic, social and cultural rights and to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, and calls for the establishment of specific timeframes and a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of these commitments

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Ireland

Amnesty International welcomes the Irish government's engagement with civil society in preparing its National Report, and its commitment to continue this dialogue during its UPR follow-up.¹ We commend Ireland's support of the large majority of recommendations made to it during the review.

We welcome Ireland's support of recommendations to ratify outstanding human rights treaties,² in particular the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.³ We note, however, that almost five years have elapsed since Ireland signed this important convention. We urge Ireland to ratify it without further delay.

Amnesty International is pleased that Ireland will sign the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.⁴ We hope Ireland will ensure access to justice for all human rights by moving expeditiously toward ratifying this Optional Protocol.

We also welcome Ireland's support of the recommendation to take measures required to respect economic, social and cultural rights.⁵ However, we note that Ireland has only partially accepted the recommendation to incorporate into law the rights to health and housing.⁶ Its commitments under this recommendation centre solely on the introduction of universal health insurance and the delivery of the government's housing policy.⁷ In light of recent severe funding cutbacks in areas such as healthcare, Ireland must now recognize these rights in law and thereby ensure the most vulnerable are protected. We urge that these rights be looked at in the upcoming review of Ireland's Constitution by a government appointed group, the Constitutional Convention.

¹ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 paragraph 63, referring to recommendation 107.50 (Austria).

² Ibid., recommendations 106.1 (Indonesia, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Peru, Austria, Canada, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Spain, Algeria, France, Hungary), 106.2 (Estonia, Brazil, Chile, France, Greece, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Switzerland), 106.3 (Peru), 106.5 (Costa Rica), 106.6 (Chile, Ecuador, Portugal, Slovenia, Turkey, France), 107.1 (Austria, Spain) and 107.2 (Costa Rica). Ireland has yet to ratify: the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); the Optional Protocol to the CRPD; the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture; and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Child the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

³ A/HRC/19/9, recommendations 106.4 (Iraq, Indonesia, Argentina, Ecuador, Spain, France) and 106.5 (Costa Rica).

⁴ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 paragraphs 6-8, referring to recommendation 107.4 (Ecuador).

⁵ A/HRC/19/9, recommendation 106.18 (Iraq).

⁶ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 paragraphs 6-8, referring to recommendation 107.4 (Ecuador).

⁷ Ibid., 107.4, paragraphs 6 and 8.

We note that UN treaty bodies have expressed concern at the prevalence of violence against women and girls in Ireland.⁸ We further note the high withdrawal rates of related complaints to police and low number of convictions in such cases.⁹ In this context, we particularly welcome Ireland's support of the recommendation to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.¹⁰ We urge the government to sign this convention at the soonest opportunity, and move to ratification and implementation without delay.

Finally, we encourage Ireland to set specific timeframes and to establish a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the recommendations accepted in this review. We welcome the government's undertaking to provide the Council with a midterm report, and encourage it to continue to keep civil society and the Council regularly informed of its progress in implementing its commitments and accepted recommendations.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Ireland on 15 March during its 19th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on Ireland:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR29/003/2011/en>

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⁸ CAT/C/IRL/CO/1, 17 June 2011, paragraph 27; CEDAW/C/IRL/CO/4-5, 22 July 2005, paragraph 28.

⁹ CCPR/C/IRL/CO/3, 30 July 2008, paragraph 7; CEDAW/C/IRL/CO/4-5, 22 July 2005, paragraph 28.

¹⁰ A/HRC/19/9/Add.1 paragraph 48, referring to recommendation 107.37 (Austria).