

30th session of the Universal Periodic Review

Review of Uzbekistan

Statement of Ireland

9 May 2017

Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

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

We commend Uzbekistan on a number of positive steps taken towards improving the human rights situation in the country. We particularly welcome Uzbekistan's increased cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, including the first ever visit of a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to the country in May 2017 and the recent visit of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. We strongly encourage Uzbekistan to continue this closer cooperation with the international human rights system, and to ensure the full implementation of recent reforms.

We note the adoption of new measures to combat torture, including the presidential decree of November 2017 stating that information obtained through the use of torture is inadmissible in criminal cases. Nonetheless, we are concerned by continued reports of the use of torture and other ill-treatment against detainees and prisoners. We therefore **recommend** that Uzbekistan carry out prompt, impartial and effective investigations into all allegations of torture and ill-treatment and prosecute and punish all those responsible, including law enforcement and prison officials, as recommended by the Committee Against Torture.

Ireland welcomes the release of a number of human rights defenders and political prisoners in recent years. We remain concerned, however, at reports of harassment, surveillance, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment of human rights defenders, independent journalists and government critics. We again **recommend** that Uzbekistan agree a precise and early date for the visit by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

We wish Uzbekistan every success in this UPR cycle.

Thank you.