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South Africa

UPR

Ireland

Ireland welcomes the South African Delegation and expresses appreciation for the National Report and presentation this afternoon.

Ireland appreciates the achievements of South Africa in tackling an extremely grim legacy of economic and social inequality. We hope that an unrelenting focus will be maintained in strengthening equality including through the national development plan, while maintaining full respect for all human rights.

Ireland, noting reports of the Independent Complaints Directorate urges that the Combating of Torture Bill be regarded as a matter of strong priority.

In relation to the issue of Xenophobia, it is clear, as the SAHRC has noted that this remains a significant challenge. Ireland *recommends* that the Government take all necessary steps to address this evil through legislation and greater public awareness programmes.

Ireland notes with appreciation the valuable role played by the SAHRC, the Public Protector and the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. Ireland urges that given their expertise and special role in the protection of human rights, the Government provide these agencies with all necessary support and funding.

Ireland encourages South Africa to continue its efforts in the prevention of gender based violence and to strengthen provision of services and accountability of government institutions in this area.

Finally, Ireland notes and welcomes real progress in addressing HIV/AIDs but especially regarding access to ARV treatment and *recommends* developing and implementing plans to reduce physical and cost barriers to accessing HIV-related health services in rural areas.