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16th session of the UPR Working Group

Remarks by Ireland on the review of the Russian Federation

Ireland welcomes the delegation of the Russian Federation and thanks it for its presentation and for the detail of its comprehensive national report.

We note a number of positive developments since the first review, such as adherence to a number of important global or regional legal instruments.

Ireland recommends that all allegations of intimidation and violence against journalists and human rights defenders be thoroughly, promptly and impartially investigated, and the perpetrators brought to justice.

Ireland notes that concerns have been raised, including by UN treaty monitoring bodies, about legislative changes made during 2012, in particular the requirement that NGOs receiving foreign funding and engaging in vaguely-defined "political activity" must register as "foreign agents", as well as about the adoption of a broad and vague definition of treason, which could act as a disincentive to legitimate activities such as contacts with UN and other international bodies. We note with concern a recent widespread series of searches and inspections of NGOs. Ireland recommends to the Russian Federation to repeal the amendment which requires NGOs that accept foreign funding to register and identify themselves as "foreign agents", as well as the amended definition of treason, and to punish any harassment, intimidation or discrediting of civil society groups.