**UPR 17 – Central African Republic**

**Statement by Ireland**

Ireland warmly welcomes the delegation of the Central African Republic and expresses appreciation for its presentation, national report and engagement with the UPR process.

The situation in the country has changed dramatically since its last review. In this context, Ireland appreciates the initiative of the Central African Republic to hold an interactive dialogue during the most recent Human Rights Council session, and was pleased that the Council decided to appoint an Independent Expert to monitor the situation of human rights in the country. We hope that the Independent Expert will be able to engage in productive contacts with all relevant actors, including civil society, in order to inform the preparation of recommendations for technical assistance which will strengthen the capacity of the authorities to promote and protect human rights.

The fight against impunity is of the utmost importance. Ireland recommends that all allegations of human rights violations, including those against members of the armed forces and of the Séléka, be thoroughly and impartially investigated, and those responsible for any such violations prosecuted.

Continual reports of sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, and in particular gang rape and sexual slavery, are of the most serious concern. Ireland urges the Central African Republic to respond to these grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law within the framework of UN Security Council resolution 1325 and its successor resolutions. In particular, Ireland recommends that special measures be put in place to monitor, identify, and report sexual and gender-based violence, with a view to its prevention and punishment, bearing in mind the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible, from amnesty processes.