

Dominican Republic – UPR 18
Statement by Ireland
5 February 2014

Ireland welcomes the delegation of the Dominican Republic and thanks it for its engagement with the UPR process and presentation today.

Ireland notes measures taken to deal with violence against women in the Dominican Republic, including provision of protection and access to information for victims. While Ireland welcomes the recent decline in fatalities from domestic violence, we remain seriously concerned about the continuing high incidence of killings of women. Ireland is also concerned that some of the provisions proposed in the draft Criminal Code may fail to punish violence against women appropriately. Ireland calls on the Dominican Republic to implement its Strategic Plan for the Prevention, Detection, Support and Punishment of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, 2011-2016, and strengthen the national legal framework for the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, ensuring that the new Criminal Code provisions fully respect women's rights.

Ireland is concerned that ruling TC 0168/13 of the Constitutional Court, issued on 23 September 2013, may result in a situation of statelessness for tens of thousands of individuals. According to the ruling, the children of individuals of non-Dominican descent, almost all of Haitian descent, who have been in the Dominican Republic and registered as Dominicans since as far back as 1929 are not eligible for Dominican nationality as their parents are considered to be "in transit". Ireland **recommends** that the Government of the Dominican Republic take urgent steps to ensure full respect for the right to a nationality, and ratify the August 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, which it signed in December 1961.

Ireland welcomes the aims of the recent National Public Safety Plan to, *inter alia*, prosecute human rights violations against the freedom of expression of journalists and threats against human rights defenders. However, Ireland is seriously concerned by reports of threats and intimidation against journalists and human rights defenders who have opposed ruling TC 0168/13 of the Constitutional Court. Ireland urges the Dominican Republic to respond positively to the visit request of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and **recommends** that the Dominican Republic ensure effective investigation of human rights violations against journalists and human rights defenders and prosecution of the individuals responsible.