

Universal Periodic Review 18

UPR of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

30 January 2014

Intervention by Ireland

Ireland welcomes the delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and thanks it for its presentation this afternoon.

We note the positive developments which have taken place since its first review, including the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination, the decriminalisation of defamation, and the visits by two special procedure mandate-holders to the country. We particularly welcome the visit of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, in light of concerns that media freedom has declined and that the media environment has become increasingly polarised.

Ireland is concerned by reports of continuing discrimination in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In particular, we are concerned that the right to the highest attainable standard of health is not being realised for the Roma population. Ireland **recommends** that a country-wide Roma needs assessment and health status study be carried out, in consultation with Roma, Roma organizations, and health professionals, as the first step to defining a new national plan of action for ensuring that the Roma have access to the highest attainable standard of health.

While Ireland welcomes the passage of the new anti-discrimination law, we note that it does not explicitly protect LGBT persons from discrimination. In light of reports of persecution and discrimination faced by the LGBT communities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ireland **recommends** that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia introduce legislation that explicitly protects LGBT persons from discrimination.