

24th session of the Universal Periodic Review

Statement by Ireland on the review of Latvia

26 January 2016

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Latvia and thanks it for its presentation today.

Ireland welcomes the positive contribution towards human rights made by Latvia during its first ever Presidency of the European Council in 2015.

Ireland further welcomes progress made by Latvia in regard to former citizens of the USSR without Latvian or other citizenship, known as non-citizens, particularly in regard to amendments made to the Citizenship Law which simplify the procedure for granting naturalisation. Ireland however shares some of the concerns of the Human Rights Committee with regard the disproportionate restrictions placed on non-citizen residents. Ireland **recommends** that Latvia remove disproportionate restrictions such as those identified by the Human Rights Committee, on non-citizens and provide for the possibility of judicial review of all refusals of naturalisation.

Ireland also welcomes Latvia's proactive and positive track record in confronting gender inequality, with steps such as the adoption of the Gender Equality Action Plan 2012-2014. We encourage Latvia to take further steps towards the elimination of domestic violence, including improving data collection methods in order to establish the magnitude and causes of domestic violence and signing and ratifying the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women.

Ireland **recommends** that Latvia ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.