

Universal Periodic Review, 25th session
Human Rights Council

UPR of Ireland, 11 May 2016
Intervention by Denmark

[Check against delivery]

Mr. President,

Denmark warmly welcomes the Irish delegation and thanks it for its presentation today.

Denmark would like to commend the Irish Government for the truly historic popular referendum, which approved a change to the Irish Constitution permitting marriage equality for same-sex couples. However, a number of challenges for LGBTI persons remain, particularly for transgender persons.

Denmark **recommends** that Ireland takes further steps to address discrimination of LGBTI persons in access to goods, employment and services, including healthcare.

Denmark notes with concern that the adoption of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act in 2013 only provides for access to abortion services in cases where the pregnancy poses a risk to the life of a woman or girl, as distinct from her health. Further, the Act establishes discriminatory assessment procedures and burdensome requirements, and criminalises abortions that do not meet the strict criteria, with a penalty of up to 14 years imprisonment.

Denmark **recommends** that Ireland takes forward the democratic process of repealing the Eight Amendment (Article 40.3.3.) of the Irish Constitution with a clear timeline, and takes all necessary steps to the decriminalisation of abortion in all circumstances, including providing for a legislative framework that ensures access to abortion services, in full compliance with previous recommendations of the Human Rights Committee (2014), the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2015), and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016).

Finally, Denmark welcomes the improvement of some conditions in prisons, including in-cell sanitation. However, issues of overcrowding remain.

Denmark **recommends** that Ireland without further delay ratifies the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (OPCAT), and initiates the process of establishing a National Preventive Mechanism.

I thank you.