

**Universal Periodic Review working group – 23<sup>rd</sup> session**

**Statement by Ireland on the review of Rwanda**

**4 November 2015**

Ireland thanks the delegation of Rwanda for the presentation of its report and welcomes positive steps taken by Rwanda since the first cycle of the UPR.

We are disturbed by continuing reports of intimidation and harassment of journalists, particularly those expressing views critical of Government, as well as of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. Ireland **recommends** that Rwanda create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment, in which human rights defenders, journalists and civil society can operate free from hindrance and insecurity, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 22/6, 27/5 and 27/31.

We note the concerns of the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding high levels of malnutrition particularly in children under five. We also note the concerns of the Special Rapporteur on Housing that a rapid shift to commercial agriculture production could jeopardise the diversity of food crop production and the welfare of small-scale farmers. Ireland **recommends** that Rwanda ensure that its agriculture policies do not undermine the food security or land rights of the most vulnerable and consider applying the "Technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality of children under 5 years of age" (A/HRC/27/31).