

## **Panel on history teaching and memorialization processes**

**27th session of the HRC**

**8 September 2014**

### **Statement by Ireland**

Ireland welcomes the opportunity to discuss the crucial issues of memorialisation and history teaching, which are key factors in ensuring societal reconciliation and stability.

The period 2012-2022 encompasses a large number of centenaries in the history of the island of Ireland. The Government approach to memorialisation in this period is guided by several principles: full acknowledgement of the totality of the island's history, the legitimacy of all traditions, mutual respect, and historical accuracy. These principles permeate all activities undertaken in the commemorative programme, with the understanding that historical events are viewed and understood in multiple ways across the island.

In recent years, commemoration has been an important vehicle for reconciliation between all traditions on the island. During this decade, Ireland is providing support for a number of commemorative projects by community and voluntary groups to challenge the notion of separate histories, and explore the ways in which shared experiences can impact on today's societal relationships. The Reconciliation Fund has supported the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education in developing a web resource for teachers in Northern Ireland, which has enhanced online support materials for teachers to address contentious issues relating to these centenaries commemorations.

In relation to history teaching, Ireland shares the concern of the Special Rapporteur that there are circumstances in which the official historical narrative can be problematic from the perspective of human rights and peace. Every education system has the dual potential to either exacerbate the conditions that contribute to violent conflict or to address them.

Ireland agrees with the Special Rapporteur's recommendation that history teaching should enable a comparative and multiperspective approach. Ireland also notes that history teaching can be integrated closely with human rights and education, particularly in areas which have been affected by periods of insecurity or which have recently emerged from conflict.

We have two questions;

- 1. Does the Panel agree that history teaching and human rights education should be more closely integrated in national curricula?*
- 2. The UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparations provide for the inclusion of an accurate account of human rights violations in curricula and human rights education as reparations aimed at satisfaction and guarantees of nonrecurrence. How can these principles be better promoted?*