

Universal Periodic Review – 23rd session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Saint Lucia

5 November 2015

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Saint Lucia and thanks it for presentation of its report.

Ireland commends Saint Lucia for progress since the first UPR cycle. We appreciate the range of targeted training and general awareness-raising campaigns conducted in fields including child sexual abuse and gender equality; and welcome ratification of the Rome Statute of the ICC and signature of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We also welcome the openness which Saint Lucia has shown in requesting and assisting technical and other assistance from international organisations as well as other States.

Ireland recognises the challenges which exist, including capacity constraints which the State Party report notes have delayed additional progress. Nonetheless we urge Saint Lucia to ratify the ICCPR, ICESCR, Convention against Torture and other core human rights treaties as expeditiously as possible; and if necessary to request technical assistance to overcome capacity constraints in that regard.

We consider that the assistance and expertise of Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council and national human rights institutions can also be powerful tools for States willing to improve human rights protections but facing capacity challenges. Ireland strongly urges Saint Lucia to extend a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council and establish without delay a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles.

We are deeply concerned by reports of extrajudicial killings. We note the statement made by the Prime Minister in March of this year concerning the findings of a Caricom-backed investigation which confirmed reports of police ‘hit lists’, corruption and non-cooperation by some senior officers with investigators. In these circumstances we are concerned that the Police Complaints Bill retains a role for police officers in determining complaints against the police. We **recommend** immediate and concerted actions by Saint Lucia to fully investigate and prosecute all reports of extrajudicial killings, including re-examination of investigations disposed of before the Caricom-Impacs report, in order to hold the perpetrators accountable; and to establish mechanisms for fully independent oversight of the police service.

Ireland recognises the process of legal including Constitutional reform underway in Saint Lucia. We welcome in particular adjustments to the Labour Code, to protect against discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation and strongly encourage further steps to prohibit discrimination more generally on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and to fully decriminalise consensual same-sex relations. However we are concerned at lack of progress on legal reform in a range of areas including children’s rights. Ireland **recommends** that Saint Lucia, in its process of legal and constitutional reform, remove any legal distinction between children born in and outside of marriage; amend its law to ensure that no person may be sentenced to the death penalty for a crime alleged to have been committed as a child; and prohibit corporal punishment in school and care settings as well as in detention.