

29th session of the Universal Periodic Review

15 – 26 January 2018

Review of Botswana

Statement of Ireland

17 January 2018

Thank you, Mr. Vice President

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

We commend Botswana on its extensive consultations with NGOs and other stakeholders in advance of drafting its national report. We further note the progress made in many areas since the last UPR cycle.

In particular, we welcome progress in relation to LGBTI rights - however, we are concerned that consensual adult same-sex sexual activities remain criminalised under the Penal Code, and that stigmatisation of LGBTI persons continues.

The death penalty remains an issue of concern. We are concerned that Botswana retains the death penalty both in law and in practice. We therefore **recommend** once again that Botswana agree to a moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards its ultimate abolition.

Ireland recalls its previous recommendations in relation to violence against women and girls. We regret that marital rape is still not recognised as a crime. We again **recommend** that Botswana enact specific legislation on marital rape, and ensure that all violence against women and girls constitutes a criminal offence.

We wish Botswana every success in this UPR cycle.

Thank you