

Human Rights Council – 28th session (2-27 March 2015)

**Statement by Ireland during interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur
on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran**

16 March 2015

Mr. President,

Ireland would like to add some remarks to those made on our behalf in the statement of the European Union.

Ireland welcomes the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Ahmed Shaheed. We thank him for his dedication to his mandate, his report to the Council and his presentation today.

While we have long been concerned about the human rights situation in Iran, we note with particular concern the information in the present report that a number of draft laws and policies containing provisions that appear to further negate human rights guaranteed by national and international laws are either currently under consideration or have been adopted since March 2014. These include provisions that appear to expand government influence over the media, civil society, political organisations, and the legal community. We appeal to the Iranian authorities to have due regard to their international obligations in the drafting of new laws and policies.

We continue to have serious concerns about the high number of executions in Iran, and note in particular the information in the report that the number of reported executions in 2014 was the highest in the past twelve years. Our concerns in this regard are heightened by concerns about fair trial standards.

The situation of members of religious minorities also continues to be of concern. We note in particular the information contained in the Special Rapporteur's report on the situation of the Baha'i, including restrictions on activities ranging from access to higher education to burying their dead. We also note with dismay the arrests, in two incidents in December, of a dozen individuals attempting to conduct Christian religious services on the occasion of Christmas.

Finally, we would like to thank the Special Rapporteur in particular for his detailed and well-considered recommendations. We hope, Mr. Special Rapporteur, that the Iranian authorities will give them due attention and cooperate with you in your important work.

We would like to ask the following question:

How can the international community best follow up on the recent UPR of Iran in order to help ensure better promotion and protection of human rights in the country?