

**28<sup>th</sup> session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**(6-17 November 2017)**

**Review of Zambia**

**Statement of Ireland**

**13 November 2017**

Thank you Mr. Vice President

Ireland welcomes the delegation of Zambia and thanks it for the presentation of its third national report. Zambia is a highly valued key partner country for Ireland in our development programme.

We welcome Zambia's efforts to advance human rights domestically and acknowledge progress made.

However, we are concerned about the negative developments regarding the freedoms of assembly and expression. In particular, we are concerned by reports that the Public Order Act is being used to restrict those freedoms. We are further concerned that this has the potential to undermine the voice of opposition and civil society groups, and to damage Zambia's strong reputation as a model of democracy. Positively, we note that the Government has opened public consultations on the reform of Public Order Act. Ireland recommends that legislation to support the freedom of assembly be improved and made clearer.

We appreciate efforts by the Government of Zambia to reform the correctional facilities system and we support these efforts. However, Ireland notes that further improvements are needed to ensure adequate living conditions for inmates, and would thus recommend that the Government of Zambia meet international standards in this regard.

Thank you