



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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29 April 2022

Excellency,

I wish to inform you that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, during its 106th session, considered the follow-up report submitted by the Government of Ireland, pursuant to article 9 (1) of the Convention and rule 65 (1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

The Committee welcomes the submission of the report, in response to its request to receive information, within one year, on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 20 (b) and (c), 22 (a) and (e) and 44 of its concluding observations (CERD/C/IRL/CO/5-9), adopted following the consideration of the State party's combined 5th to 9th periodic reports, at its 100th session, held from 25 November–13 December 2019.

The Committee appreciates the opportunity provided to continue its dialogue with the State party, and would like to draw the State party's attention to the observations mentioned below. The Committee requests that comments and responses on actions taken by the State party on these issues be included in its combined 10th to 12th periodic reports, which is due for submission in a single document, on 28 January 2024.

### **Paragraph 20 (b) and (c) of the Concluding Observations**

While noting that the State party intends to strengthen its action against hate speech through the General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Hate Crime) Bill 2021, the Committee regrets the lack of information on specific and concrete steps to tackle the prevalence of racist hate speech on the Internet and social media, in close cooperation with internet service providers. The Committee takes note that the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill has been introduced into the Houses of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament), and that the Bill will transpose the European Union's Audiovisual Media Services Directive into Irish law, though it regrets the lack of information on steps taken to ensure that this Bill is in line with international human rights standards. The Committee considers the answer to this recommendation partially satisfactory and requests the State party to expedite the adoption of these Bills and to provide the missing information in its next periodic report.

H.E. Mr. Michael Gaffey  
Permanent Representative of Ireland  
to the United Nations Office  
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### **Paragraph 22 (a) and (e) of the Concluding Observations**

The Committee notes the information provided by the State party that the enactment process of the General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Hate Crime) Bill 2021, which includes racist motivation as an aggravating circumstance, is about to begin. The Committee requests the State party to provide, in its next periodic report, an update on this legislation if adopted, as well as information on steps taken to implement it.

The Committee also notes the information provided by the State party on the various degrees of training provided to, or planned for, police, prosecutors and judges related to hate crimes. However, the Committee considers the answer to this recommendation partially satisfactory and requests the State party to provide, in its next periodic report, an update on the implementation of the planned training on hate crimes, diversity and cultural awareness for the An Garda Síochána and on any new training carried out in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) on hate crimes and racism. The Committee also requests the State party to provide further information on the training in unconscious bias, that members of the judiciary have taken part in, including what percentage of the judiciary take part in such training, and if the training covers racial discrimination as per article 1 of the Convention.

### **Paragraph 44 of the Concluding Observations**

The Committee notes the information provided by the State party and requests it to include, in its next periodic report, the conclusions of the Legal Aid Board and the Free Legal Advice Centres as to how the Legal Aid Board can better support Travellers to vindicate their rights. The Committee also notes the planned review of the civil legal aid scheme and requests the State party to provide details on this review in its next periodic report, and for it to take into account the recommendations of the Committee in this respect, in particular to extend the scope of the Legal Aid Board to the areas of law that are particularly relevant to Travellers and other ethnic minority groups. The Committee considers the answer to this recommendation partially satisfactory.

Rest assured, Excellency, that the Committee looks forward to continuing its constructive dialogue with the Government of Ireland, with a view to providing it with assistance in its efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Verene Shepherd  
Chair

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination