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Briefing on the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the Committee on the Rights of the Child Pre-sessional Working Group 72 – October 2015

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References in *Italics* are to paragraphs in the Concluding Observations on third and fourth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (CRC/C/GBR/4)

Recommendations for the Committee are in **Bold**.

Basic health and welfare

1. Sex education

- 1.1. Paragraph 42 of the concluding observations on the UK's second report¹ called for "the inclusion of sex education to all children".
- 1.2. Whilst state secondary schools (other than academies and free schools) have to provide basic sex education, the only topics they must cover are HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.
- 1.3. Legislation allows primary schools, academies and free schools to choose not to teach a programme of sex and relationship education (SRE).
- 1.4. Other basic sex education such as puberty and reproduction is covered in primary science and the menstrual cycle and reproductive system in secondary science. This is part of the National Curriculum which academies and free schools don't have to follow.
- 1.5. Even where SRE is provided, successive governments have permitted parents to withdraw their children from some parts of sex education lessons². This makes children particularly vulnerable and it is likely that parents exercising the right of withdrawal, often on religious grounds, may not be providing this information at home. LGBT children are at particular risk.
- 1.6. LGBT children are also put at risk by the ability of faith schools to teach SRE within their religious framework, which can ignore LGBT issues or include negative or discriminatory teachings about LGBT sex and relationships.
- 1.7. Children in ultra-orthodox schools are also at particular disadvantage (one state funded faith school was even found to be censoring exam questions relating to human reproduction).

¹ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200203/jtselect/jtrights/117/11716.htm>

² <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/other-compulsory-subjects>

- 1.8. **We believe that SRE is every child's right and urge the Committee to recommend that legislation should require all state-funded schools to provide sex and relationships education – this would include academies, free schools and primary schools.**
- 1.9. **We recommend that the law be changed so that in all schools, whether publicly funded or not, there is no legal right to parental opt-out of SRE lessons and that the State Party be asked to demonstrate concrete measures to ensure that age-appropriate SRE is being comprehensively taught in all schools without religious bias.**

Education

2. Religious Segregation in Northern Ireland

- 2.1. We see little progress relative to concluding observation/recommendation in para 66(e)/67(i) on the problem of segregation of education, which is still significant in Northern Ireland.
- 2.2. Communities continue to live separate lives³ while potentially the most effective way of promoting cohesion in the longer term would be a completely integrated school system.
- 2.3. In its Fifth Periodic Report to the Committee, para 9, the UK informed the Committee that, in line with the statutory duty⁴ to encourage and facilitate integrated education, the number of integrated schools has increased from 47 in 2002/03 to 62 in 2012/13. This fails to acknowledge that only 7% of children in Northern Ireland currently attend integrated schools.⁵
- 2.4. Religious groups are strongly opposed to a loss of confessional schools and continue to heavily influence the Northern Ireland Executive. However, there is an overwhelming demand amongst Northern Ireland citizens for integrated schools⁶. 68% believe the issue of segregated education should be a priority for the Executive, with 57% saying politicians should set a target date for complete desegregation. Notably, 82% of those expressing an opinion thought the international community should do more to encourage politicians to desegregate the education system⁷.
- 2.5. **We therefore urge the Committee to strongly recommend that the State Party makes a commitment to phase out religiously segregated publicly-funded schools in Northern Ireland and replace them with integrated schools within a defined and reasonable timeframe.**

3. Segregated schooling in England

- 3.1. The UK's long tradition of providing publicly funded religious schools is becoming increasingly inappropriate and divisive as Britain's religious landscape rapidly changes. The potential for schools to play a vital role in building social cohesion is being squandered. This role will only be successful if the diversity of pupils in them matches that of the wider society.

³ as shown in last two paras of BBC report http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/topics/troubles_everyday_life

⁴ Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989

⁵ http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/10-types_of_school-nischools_pg/16-schools-integratedschools_pg.htm

⁶ <http://www.ief.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Lucid-Talk-Attitudinal-Survey250213.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.ief.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Integrated-education-poll-June-2013.pdf>

- 3.2. Polling consistently shows that a majority of UK citizens are not religious. The share of the population which is religious is also increasingly fractured into growing minority faiths. The proportion of the population identifying as Anglican has fallen by two fifths in 10 years and minority faiths, including Islam, are set to grow rapidly this century.
- 3.3. The state faith school sector is currently dominated by the Church of England and Catholic Church, with the proportion of non-Christian faith state schools being relatively small.
- 3.4. State education is however being increasingly organised around religious identities, leading to greater religious segregation. Religious schools, particularly minority religious schools, are also the most ethnically segregated. The majority of Sikh, Muslim and Hindu state-funded schools have no 'white British' pupils. At the same time, most Jewish state schools have no 'Asian' pupils at all⁸.
- 3.5. Segregation, already at unacceptable levels, is growing in the English schools system as a result of the Free Schools initiative. This enables groups of parents, charities, businesses, and religious or voluntary groups to set up schools with public money.
- 3.6. Such free schools when faith based are however limited to admit a maximum of 50% of pupil places by reference to faith when the school is oversubscribed. The limit is to enable pupils of other faiths or none to be admitted.
- 3.7. As faith schools (including minority faith free schools) are part of the school system, a lack of alternative places has forced some local authorities to allocate to these minority faith schools children with no connection with the minority faith, to the resentment of their parents. This has happened in Sikh schools in South Buckinghamshire and Leeds.⁹
- 3.8. **We therefore urge the Committee to recommend that all new publicly funded schools are secular in character and truly inclusive and equally welcoming to children of all religion and belief backgrounds.**

4. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

- 4.1. Around a third of publicly-funded schools are religious schools which regard their schools as part of their mission. Most of these are Church of England (the established church), despite only around 2% of parents of school age children attending Church of England services on a normal Sunday. Around 10% of schools are Catholic and the proportion of religious schools is growing under the Government's "free schools" policy.
- 4.2. The growth in the proportion of religious schools, including minority faith schools, is making it harder for children to receive an education which doesn't run counter to their or their parents' philosophical convictions.
- 4.3. The rising and already significant majority of young people are non-religious. Nevertheless, there is often no alternative (particularly in rural areas) but for them to attend a Church of England school, and their parents may even be in effect forced to attend church to secure entry for their child to a local school. As noted above such schools are run with a mission which is likely to conflict with the philosophical convictions of the children or parents of other religions or none.
- 4.4. As mentioned in 3.7, a shortage of school places is also resulting in children being allocated unsuitable places in schools run by a minority religion with which the parents have no connection.

⁸ <https://humanism.org.uk/2013/10/18/religious-schools-racially-segregated-state-schools-new-findings-show/>

⁹ <https://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2015/04/nss-backs-parents-allocated-sikh-school-against-their-wishes>

- 4.5. But the parental right to education (Article 2 of the First Protocol) is not the only concern. The Convention recognises that as children mature they are able to form their own views on matters of religion or belief. We are concerned that the proliferation of faith-based schools is impeding children's independent rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- 4.6. Whilst religious organisations may have strategic interests in running publicly funded schools, we are concerned that in providing the funding which allows them to do so, the State Party is neglecting the principle of the best interests of the child by not regarding this as the primary consideration in all legislative and policy matters affecting their education.
- 4.7. LGBT children continue to be at particular risk in schools, particularly religious schools and the rate of self-harm and suicide is significantly higher than for other children. LGBT children should have the right to express their sexual orientation and gender identity throughout their education without hindrance. Faith based education impedes this right.
- 4.8. **We therefore urge the Committee to strongly recommend that the State Party makes a commitment to:**
 - 4.8.1. **Discontinue any further openings of publicly-funded religious schools to facilitate better social cohesion and reduce incidences of children being educated contrary to the philosophical convictions of their parents.**
 - 4.8.2. **Ensure that all new schools are fully inclusive and equally welcoming to children of all religion and belief backgrounds; prepare children for their role as equal citizens of a multicultural, religiously diverse liberal democracy; and encourage the development of children's autonomy.**
 - 4.8.3. **Ensure that sufficient places at non-religious publicly-funded schools are available in all areas to preclude any need for children to be allocated to schools run by a religion with which the parents are not connected, or that would conflict with the parents' philosophical convictions.**

5. Non-discrimination

- 5.1. Concluding observation *para 24* the Committee welcomed the UK's plans to consolidate and strengthen equality legislation, highlighting "clear opportunities to mainstream children's right to non-discrimination into the United Kingdom anti-discrimination law".
- 5.2. Regrettably, however, faith schools are granted exemptions¹⁰ in the Equality Act 2010 allowing them to discriminate widely on grounds of religion or belief, including in relation to admissions.
- 5.3. This means schools with a religious character are permitted to use religious criteria to give priority in admissions to children, or children of parents, who practise a particular religion.
- 5.4. Such arrangements disadvantage children whose parents are non-religious or of the 'wrong' religion. Many parents find that because they are non-religious, non-practising or of the 'wrong' faith, they are unable to send their children to their local state school, which is often the most appropriate school for their needs.

- 5.5. Admissions policies which discriminate on religious grounds are not only unfair and detrimental to community cohesion, there is also compelling evidence that they also encourage socio-economic segregation.
- 5.6. We believe such discrimination is in breach of Article 2 which is intended to protect children against all forms of discrimination on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.
- 5.7. Some local authorities also discriminate against pupils on the grounds of religion and belief in the provision of subsidised or free transport, and are permitted to do so under these exemptions.
- 5.8. **We urge the Committee to recommend that children and young people's access to local schools is never determined by their religious beliefs or activities, or those of their parents. And that the exemption from equality law for school transport is also removed.**

6. Right to education – School attendance

- 6.1. Article 28 requires States Parties to take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
- 6.2. Reports from April 2015¹¹ indicate that the UK Department for Education is investigating up to fifty unregulated schools, some of which have been set up by known Islamic extremists. Many of their pupils, including some from Somali, Bengali and Pakistani families, have been taken out of mainstream schools to attend unregistered schools without proper regulation or oversight.
- 6.3. This has been a long-standing problem within the UK's Orthodox Jewish community. A government briefing from 2011¹² reveals that the Department for Education was aware then of "800-1000 Jewish boys aged 13-16 in Hackney missing from the registered schools system. These boys attend unregistered [and therefore unlawful] 'yeshivas' where the curriculum is entirely religious".
- 6.4. Whilst the UK has shown a willingness to act when there are concerns about children becoming radicalised, we believe that in pursuance of Articles 28 and 29, a greater emphasis needs to be placed on ensuring that all children receive an education which develops the child to their fullest potential; develops respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and prepares the child for responsible life in a free society.
- 6.5. **We urge the Committee to recommend that the State Party does everything within its power to ensure that all children and young people attend registered schools which are subject to regulation and monitoring and that it explains what new steps it will take to achieve this and establish a regular reporting procedure to monitor this.**

7. Worship in schools

- 7.1. England and Wales are the only countries in the world to require by law a daily mainly Christian act of worship of in every publicly funded school in which pupils are required by

¹¹ http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/Education/article1543061.ece

¹²

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221858/jewish_20independent_20schools.doc

law to take part, not simply to attend. The law gives parents the right to withdraw pupils, although this is rarely exercised as to do so can subject children, especially younger ones, to obloquy from fellow pupils. Only “sixth form” pupils, aged over 16 can withdraw themselves, so pupils less than 16 years old will be required to worship even if they do not wish to do so, unless their parents are prepared to withdraw them.

- 7.2. This has been repeatedly criticised by the (UK) Parliamentary Human Rights Committee¹³ as a breach of older pupils’ Human Rights. Attempts to change the law to give pupils below 16 years old of “sufficient maturity and intelligence” the right to withdraw have been resisted by successive Governments. Whilst the Convention recognises that the level of a child’s participation in decisions must be appropriate to the child’s level of maturity, UK law does not.
- 7.3. Scottish legislation also imposes a statutory duty on local authorities to provide religious observance in Scottish schools.
- 7.4. **We urge the Committee to recommend that legislation is changed to remove any requirement on schools to provide worship and for children to “take part”, and make attendance at collective worship voluntary in all publicly funded schools, including religious schools. As an interim measure the violation of children’s rights should be reduced by the extension of self-withdrawal to secondary school pupils (from approximately 13 years old).**

Violence, abuse and neglect

UK-wide comments:

8. Vatican withholding of information or pressure not to disclose information

- 8.1. It is recognised that much sexual abuse of minors is perpetrated by family and family friends. It also takes place in secular institutions. Nevertheless, it has become very clear that those working in religious institutions often have additional power and opportunity to abuse minors and to cover up and exploit this. Such institutions where this is a significant problem are to be found in many denominations and religions. For these reasons alone, and there may be others, we would argue that such institutions attract those intent on such abuse. Measures to protect children should take account of this additional vulnerability, and our recommendations reflect this.
- 8.2. To the extent that prosecutions or investigations into abuse of minors are believed to be being actively or passively obstructed by the Vatican or evidence is required which is held by the Vatican unique difficulties will be encountered in securing such information.
- 8.3. Throughout the UK, there is a consistent pattern over clerical abuse of minors: the abuse is covered up by religious institutions, often over decades; victims’ complaints are ignored or even denied; compensation is resisted; and perpetrators and those that abetted their activities largely escape prosecution as a result of the institutions’ failure to report them. One victim recently wrote “There is not one documented case in this country [England] of the Catholic church handing in one of their offending priests. It has all been victim-led.”¹⁴

¹³ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200506/jtselect/jtrights/247/24705.htm>

¹⁴ <http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/jailed-paedophile-priest-james-robinson-8557056>

8.4. We recommend that where prosecutions or investigations are believed to be being actively or passively obstructed by the Vatican or evidence is required which is held by the Vatican, that all diplomatic avenues are exploited and pressure is applied to secure co-operation and the recovery of necessary evidence.

8.5. The Catholic Church throughout the UK (as In Ireland) and Vatican have rarely if ever volunteered evidence and continue to resist all cases against them or their clerics, whether criminal or civil. Even one of the members of the Pope's Commission on Child protection, Peter Saunders, urged, as the Committee did, that "the Pope should release all the documents the Vatican has on abusive priests"¹⁵, but there is no sign that they will do this, despite this denying justice to victims and shielding perpetrators from justice.

8.6. The Commission on Child Protection set up by the Pope achieves nothing for victims or justice, but creates unwarranted positive PR for the Vatican. Instead of seeking advice from those on the Commission the Vatican should be following the Committee's concluding observations, rather than denouncing them and even trying to undermine the Committee. The recently established tribunal on bishops who have failed adequately to deal with clerical child abuse is not only unnecessary, it purports to provide an extra-judicial process. Such matters should be dealt with exclusively by the criminal courts with power to impose significant punishments and criminal records.

8.7. We recommend that where prosecutions or investigations are believed to be being actively or passively obstructed by the Vatican or evidence is required which is held by the Vatican, that all diplomatic avenues are exploited and pressure is applied to secure co-operation and the recovery of necessary evidence.

9. Mandatory reporting

9.1. Mandatory reporting of child abuse (as the Committee has recommended for Ireland) is only in place in Northern Ireland as a consequence of legislation connected with terrorism. Elsewhere in the UK, there is no requirement, although the intention to legislate has been proposed for England¹⁶. Such mandatory reporting is unfortunately necessary given the unprincipled unwillingness of most religious organisations over decades to report suspected abuse and co-operate with enquiries. The necessity of such provisions is illustrated by Cardinal Daly (Primate of all Ireland) admitting to the Northern Ireland inquiry in June 2015¹⁷ that an abuse scandal that involved hundreds of victims "was kept a secret — very, very secret".

9.2. We are also aware of children being systematically raped, predominantly by gangs of British-Pakistani Muslim men, on a large scale over decades in numerous towns in England, including Rochdale, Rotherham and Oxford¹⁸, often with the knowledge of local authorities but without until recently any prosecutions being made. The children were often transported to their abusers by taxi during the night.

¹⁵ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/vaticancityandholyysee/11394714/Pope-Francis-told-to-hand-priests-over-to-police-as-new-Vatican-child-abuse-commission-starts-work.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/queens-speech-2015-what-it-means-for-you/queens-speech-2015-what-it-means-for-you#policing-and-criminal-justice-bill>

¹⁷ <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/sean-brady-says-abuse-kept-secret-to-save-church-s-good-name-1.2262737>

¹⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/mar/03/professionals-blamed-oxfordshire-girls-for-their-sexual-abuse-report-finds>

- 9.3. **We recommend that statutory mandatory reporting of abuse of minors is introduced urgently in England & Wales and Scotland for those (including in clerical institutions) with a duty of care, and that to the maximum ability of the law it also relates to historic abuse and that penalties for non-compliance are severe, which we understand not to be the case in Ireland.**
- 9.4. **We also recommend that legal avenues be pursued to prosecute those cognisant of abuse in a trade or professional capacity such as taxi drivers, as a deterrent.**

10. Time limits

- 10.1. Many victims have been psychologically damaged by abuse and by the Catholic Church's persistent refusal to accept their accounts of abuse so have not had the confidence to take legal action for many years after abuse took place. We welcome the decision in Scotland "to lift the three-year time bar on civil actions, including compensation claims for damages in cases of historical abuse that took place after 1964"¹⁹
- 10.2. **We recommend a complete review throughout the UK of time limits for abuse of minors in both criminal and civil cases and for legal aid rules to be altered to reflect any changes made.**

11. Inquiries

- 11.1. We recommend that the terms of reference of in all three formal inquiries being conducted for England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to be expanded to include:
- 11.1.1. **Gathering evidence from all possible sources of the nature, scale, dates of abuse; then identifying individuals for which there is credible evidence of responsibility (a) for such abuse and (b) facilitating it and (c) for failure to report the abuse to secular authorities. This information should be used to recommend (i) potential legal action, (ii) draw conclusions about particular establishments or systemic problems in institutions and (iii) provide data to assist with the investigations referred to below.**
- 11.1.2. **Investigating the conduct of the various arms of the religious bodies in acceptance, reasoned rejection of criminal proceedings and civil claims, focussing on the extent, if any, to which these bodies appear to have failed to co-operate or actively obstructed such proceedings.**
- 11.1.3. **Investigating the prosecution strategy adopted to date and make recommendations as to how this could be improved, for example using the full force of the law for the discovery of evidence and for a more active prosecution of suspected perpetrators and those who shielded and enabled them.**
- 11.1.4. **Investigating what measures have been taken to (in the words of Article 39 of the Convention) "promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim[s]" by any institution found to be connected with abuse of minors and assessing their adequacy, and to the extent that they were inadequate, whether the State Party has taken such measures.**

¹⁹ <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Inquiry-into-Historical-Abuse-of-Children-in-Care-1949.aspx> .

11.1.5. Investigating what compensation has been paid, and recommending what should be paid and by whom and using the full force of the law to secure adequate compensation for victims. (We note that the state paid compensation in Ireland, albeit there is considerable doubt as to the adequacy of the amounts paid, and whether the scheme included all appropriate victims and whether the institutions partly responsible paid the state an adequate share of the cost.)

11.1.6. The chairs of each inquiry to report annually about whether the resources made available to the inquiry are adequate to fulfil its terms of reference and whether police and investigating resources appear adequate to investigate the claims of victims.

11.1.7. The chairs of each inquiry to report annually their opinion about the extent to which the UK's obligations under Articles 19, 34 and 39 of the Convention have not been fully implemented in the territorial extent of their inquiry and to make any recommendations they wish as to how this can be remedied.

11.2. And for all the foregoing, we recommend that the inquiries' reports include as much information as possible about the above investigations.

11.3. We make under Scotland and Northern Ireland sections additional recommended expansions of the terms of reference for their inquiries.

12. England & Wales

12.1. In 2014 and 2015 the (established) Church of England²⁰ and Methodists²¹, both major institutional churches, have admitted very significant levels of clerical child abuse going back decades. Such is the level of abuse of minors in the Catholic Church that a book has been written about it by a leading child abuse lawyer²². A UK child protection watchdog reports that 52 Roman Catholic priests have been defrocked in England and Wales for sexual abuse since 2001²³.

12.2. We hope that the wide-ranging inquiry into such abuse of minors will lead to justice being served for perpetrators and those who facilitated them and for victims, both criminal and in compensation, which the churches (especially the Catholic Church) continue to resist paying, even when admitting guilt.

12.3. The RC Church, for example, had not paid compensation to victims when we last enquired in the dispute over responsibility for payment between two arms of that Church, the Diocese of Middlesbrough and the de la Salle Brothers, over acknowledged abuse at an approved school decades ago in Market Weighton in north east England, and many of the victims have already died without receiving it, even following a Supreme Court ruling in 2012²⁴.

13. We recommend the England and Wales enquiry is expanded to include items shown under United Kingdom "Enquiries", above in 11.1 and 11.2.

²⁰ <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/oct/27/justin-welby-1950s-personnel-files-clergy-child-abuse-investigation-confessional-confidentiality>

²¹ <http://www.methodist.org.uk/news-and-events/news-releases/church-issues-%E2%80%99full-and-unreserved-apology%E2%80%99-to-abuse-survivors>

²² <http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/world/catholic+abuse+in+england+and+wales+revealed/3767082.html> and

²³ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/24/catholicism-religion>

²⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-humber-20424136>

Scotland

- 13.1. The Cardinal formerly in charge the Catholic Church of Scotland, Cardinal O'Brien, was removed by the Pope from his duties as a result his own sexual-abuse related activities, including misusing his position of power. He presided over the eight Scottish bishops who refused the request of child abuse academic expert, Alan Draper, who they had appointed, for independent experts to investigate numerous claims of clerical abuse.²⁵ Most were of minors and a significant number of these accusations related to alleged events the 1990s. Abuse victims fighting for justice continue to be fiercely rebuffed by the Church which seems systemically in denial and in so doing perpetrating the abuse on victims.
- 13.2. Sexual crimes (not solely those institutionally-connected, but mostly concerning minors) now make up "65-75%" of High Court prosecutions. Mr Draper (referred to above), has expressed concern that the inquiry would be overwhelmed with thousands of cases and that the 50 dedicated officers of the newly announced National Child Abuse Investigation Unit would be unable to cope with them.²⁶
- 13.3. Given the foregoing, we consider that the terms of reference of the inquiry in Scotland to be grossly inadequate.
- 13.4. **We recommend that the scope of the Scottish inquiry²⁷ be further expanded to include children not in care as well as those who are in schools, parish and religious order settings as well as residential ones.**
- 13.4.1. **And if Magdalene Laundries in Scotland housed minors, these should be specifically added to the terms of reference.**
- 13.5. **The additional items shown under United Kingdom "Inquiries", above.**

14. Northern Ireland

- 14.1. The greatest per capita reported known instances of abuse in the world are in the neighbouring Republic of Ireland. Most of this abuse involved clerics of the Roman Catholic Church. The RC Church in Ireland, and as the Committee is very aware, the Vatican, continues to shield from secular justice (and therefore potentially jail and criminal records) clerical perpetrators of child rape. Similarly shielded from justice by the Church are those senior clerics who have known or suspected clerics of abuse of minors, facilitated them to continue working and often to re-offend.
- 14.2. The Committee will be aware that the UK/Northern Ireland shares a common border with Ireland and some RC dioceses straddle that Border. These dioceses have not been subject to independent inquiries, such as Ferns, Cloyne and Dublin that found clerical abuse of minors on an industrial scale. There seems no reason not to assume there has been significant abuse in other dioceses of the Irish Catholic Church, some of which straddle the border and some are entirely in Northern Ireland.
- 14.3. While welcome the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry set up in Northern Ireland, albeit belatedly, its terms of reference are, given the foregoing, grossly inadequate - and much less thorough than those of the independent inquiries of dioceses in Ireland.

²⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-21715473>

²⁶ <http://www.scottishlegal.com/2015/04/21/concerns-new-child-abuse-investigation-unit-not-up-to-task/>

²⁷ <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Inquiry-into-Historical-Abuse-of-Children-in-Care-1949.aspx>

14.4. We are convinced, and we note that Amnesty International has independently come to the same conclusion²⁸, that the terms of reference²⁹ of that inquiry are inadequate, particularly because, being limited to residential care, it excludes schools. Nor is it made explicitly clear that the inquiry includes, or should include, Magdalene Laundries. The terms of reference should focus on scrutiny of the Church and establishing accountability, but barely do so.

14.5. **We recommend that the terms of reference of the Northern Ireland enquiry be expanded to include:**

14.5.1. **abuse of minors in schools and clerical and parish and religious order settings and specifically Magdalene Laundries**

14.5.2. **The additional items shown under United Kingdom**

Any questions, queries or, requests for additional or clarifying information should be addressed to: Keith Porteous Wood, executive director, National Secular Society
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²⁸ <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/blogs/childrens-human-rights-network/northern-ireland-church-child-abuse-reports-are-inadequate> and <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/institutional-and-clerical-abuse-northern-ireland#.VZDjzvlVhBc>

²⁹ <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/executive-statements/statement-to-assembly-hia-inquiry-tor.htm>