

IRELAND – progress report following the Global Leader’s Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, September 2015

Ireland’s strong commitment to gender equality and the elimination of gender based violence is reflected in the country’s foreign; international development; and domestic policies.

Ireland continues to work to strengthen international standards to address gender inequality and promote women’s empowerment, including through UN structures, and has joined the *HeForShe* and *Geneva Gender Champions* initiatives. This commitment is also reflected in Ireland’s active membership of the Human Rights Council and recent election to the UN Commission on the Status of Women from 2017 to 2021.

Over 46% of Ireland’s bilateral Official Development Assistance is focused on addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment. Preventing and responding to Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a core priority for Irish Aid (Ireland’s overseas development programme). The Irish Consortium on GBV – a collaboration between Irish humanitarian, development and human rights agencies, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Irish Defence Forces – works to share learning and build our capacities to prevent and respond to GBV in developing countries.

DFAT is working to ensure that Irish Aid, through its policies and programmes, supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in developing countries. At national level, recognising that effective implementation will require a broad and integrated domestic policy response, the Government is engaged in establishing a national implementation framework for the 2030 Agenda which will provide for coordinated engagement across Government as well as outreach to a broad group of stakeholders.

Ireland is implementing its second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2015 – 2018). The Plan includes domestic and international commitments with actions relating to overseas development aid, peace-keeping and diplomatic engagement, as well as to migrant women affected by conflict living in Ireland, and women affected by the Northern Ireland conflict. A mid-term review will be conducted in 2016.

In November 2015, Ireland signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence; and separately a new positive duty obliging public bodies to have regard, in performing their functions, to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and treatment came into effect. The 2nd national strategy and related action plan on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence were published in January 2016. A new National Women’s Strategy will be published by end 2016 which will inform a new integrated framework for social inclusion to tackle inequality and poverty.

September 2016

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