



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta
an Duine agus Comhionannas
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Final Approved Minutes
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
Extraordinary Meeting
1:30pm-3:30pm, 15 November 2019
IHREC, 16-22 Green Street, Dublin 7

Present - Commission Members:

- Heydi Foster Breslin (HFB)
- Paddy Connolly (PC)
- Colm O' Dwyer (COD)
- Salome Mbugua (SMb)
- Frank Conaty (FC)
- Tony Geoghegan (TG)
- Caroline Fennell (CF)

Apologies:

None.

In Attendance:

- Laurence Bond, Director (LB)
- Iris Elliott, Head of Policy & Research (IE)
- Ruth Gallagher, Acting Head of Strategic Engagement (RG)
- Muireann Ní Thuairisg, Minute Taker

A meeting of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission took place between 1:30pm and 3:30pm on 15 November 2019 at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission offices, 16–22 Green Street, Dublin 7.

1.1 Closed Session

The Commission met in closed session, without the Executive present.

2.1 CERD

As agreed at the meeting on 29 October 2019, Commission members discussed the priority issues to be foregrounded in the 10 minutes oral statement to the CERD Committee which will be delivered by SMb in Geneva on 2 December 2019, and in related meetings with the Country Rapporteur, CERD Secretariat and in related press and communications. Noting the CERD list of themes and the Key Recommendations summary in IHREC's final submission, members emphasised that structural and institutional change is needed to combat racism and create a more inclusive society, and also agreed to foreground institutional racism and cultural competency across public services, housing, hate speech and hate crime and direct provision.

It was agreed that the staff would draft an oral statement for finalisation by SMb. The oral statement will not need to be circulated to members for sign off.

TG agreed to join the IHREC delegation in Geneva.

IHREC are organising an event to live screen the UN CERD meeting in the public space on 3 December 2019 and invitations will be circulated shortly to civil society to attend.

3.1 AOB

PC raised a matter under AOB in relation to the treatment of people with disabilities in institutions. He knows of a child living in unsuitable and worrying conditions with 12 others in a residential centre.

He suggested that the Commission needed to agree how it could respond to such matters of concern in an effective manner.

It was agreed that PC would follow up with the Director and that this matter would be included on the agenda for the Commission meeting of December 10th.

4.1 Update from Director

The Director briefed the Commission on a significant employment law matter and updated the Commission on the following matters:

- A Workplace Advisory Committee meeting was held on 14 November 2019.
- On 12 November 2019, the Commission welcomed the Supreme Court judgment in *Artur Celmer v. Minister for Justice and Equality*. A note on the case will be provided to Commission members in advance of the December meeting.
- A letter received from the Coroners Society raised some concerns in relation to the Commission's draft Code of Practice on the rights of families at inquests. IHREC have requested a meeting and following this, the Director will revert to the Commission with an update.
- The Department of Justice and Equality have invited submissions to a consultation reviewing the legislation on incitement to hatred. The deadline is 13 December 2019 and a draft submission is in preparation.

- The Director has met with the secretary of the Citizens' Assembly. The Assembly will be issuing an invitation for submissions early in the New Year and it is proposed that work commence on a Commission submission.
- The Department of Justice and Equality has indicated that it wishes to have further discussions on IHREC's enforcement role in the Gender Pay Gap Bill.
- The date of the IHREC Annual Lecture, by Prof Philippe Sands had to be moved to 16 December 2019.
- Acting Chair, COD participated in the ENNHRI General Assembly Meeting in Brussels on November 13th and opened the ENNHRI Annual Conference on the following day.
- A tender for a scoping study on human rights and climate change has just issued.

The meeting concluded at 3:30pm.

Signed:



Colm O' Dwyer
Acting Chair

Date:

10. 12. 2019

10 December 2019