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**Human Rights Council**

**Forty-second session**

Agenda 6

**Universal Periodic Review**

Written submission by the Northern Ireland (UK): Human Rights Commission, Great Britain: Equality and Human Rights Commission, Scotland: Scottish Human Rights Commission [[1]](#footnote-2)\*

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Human Rights Council hereby transmits the communication submitted by the Northern Ireland (UK): Human Rights Commission, Great Britain: Equality and Human Rights Commission, Scotland: Scottish Human Rights Commission[[2]](#footnote-3)\*\*, reproduced below in accordance with rule 7(b) of the rules of procedures described in the annex to Council resolution 5/1, according to which participation of national human rights institutions is to be based on arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights, including resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005.

Annex

[English only]

Submission by the Northern Ireland (UK): Human Rights Commission, Great Britain: Equality and Human Rights Commission, Scotland: Scottish Human Rights Commission

Universal Periodic Review joint statement by the UK NHRIs to the HRC 42nd session at the mid-term stage.

Mr President,

I make this statement on behalf of the UK’s three ‘A status’ National Human Rights Institutions.

In response to the UPR 3rd cycle, the UK Government reiterated its full commitment to the UPR process, volunteering to publish an update report by May 2018 and a mid-term report by May this year; disappointingly, the latter is now overdue.

At this mid-term stage, the Commissions remind the UK Government of their obligations to ensure non-retrogression of rights protection both in the context of any reform of the Human Rights Act and in leaving the EU.  Specifically in relation to Northern Ireland, the draft Withdrawal Agreement 2018 contained a commitment to non-diminution of rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity under the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. How this commitment and these provisions will be maintained in future renegotiation or in a no-deal scenario is a matter of significant concern.

The Commissions highlight the need for the UK and devolved governments to develop robust and effective follow-up mechanisms before the fourth UPR cycle to ensure implementation of recommendations stemming from the UPR process and from other treaty bodies.

In Scotland, consideration is being given to the establishment of a national mechanism for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of human rights. This is encouraging and should be acted on.

The Commissions stand ready to offer technical and practical support on all these issues.

Thank you.

1. \* National human rights institution with “A”-status accreditation from the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. \*\* Reproduced in the annex as received, in the language of submission only. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)