CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Twenty Sixth Session
Agenda Item 3

Oral Statement submitted by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (A Status NHRI of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Title: Reduction of State support for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Mr President,

I welcome the opportunity to present this statement in the name of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

The Commission was established following the 1998 Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. It operates in accordance with the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (the Paris Principles). It has also been accredited with A status by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

Recalling the Paris Principles and the requirement for adequate funding by state parties to ensure the smooth conduct of the activities of national institutions; and, further recalling General Assembly resolution 48/134 and the encouragement of states parties to strengthening national institutions having regard to the Paris Principles;

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission reports to the Members of the Council its concern that the Government of the United Kingdom has reduced its financial support for the Commission by 25% over the last 4 years. It is currently proposing an additional reduction of 11.15% in 2015.

The actions of the Government of the United Kingdom puts at risk the status of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission as recognised by the International Coordinating Committee. It weakens the institution's capacity to operate effectively and its ability to protect and promote human rights in a jurisdiction emerging from violent conflict.
We raise this to the Members today in recognition of UPR recommendations concerning the conformity of NHRIs to the Paris Principles.

The Commission urges Members of the Council to call upon the Government of the United Kingdom to reaffirm its support for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and to encourage the adequate resourcing of the institution in accordance with the Paris Principles.