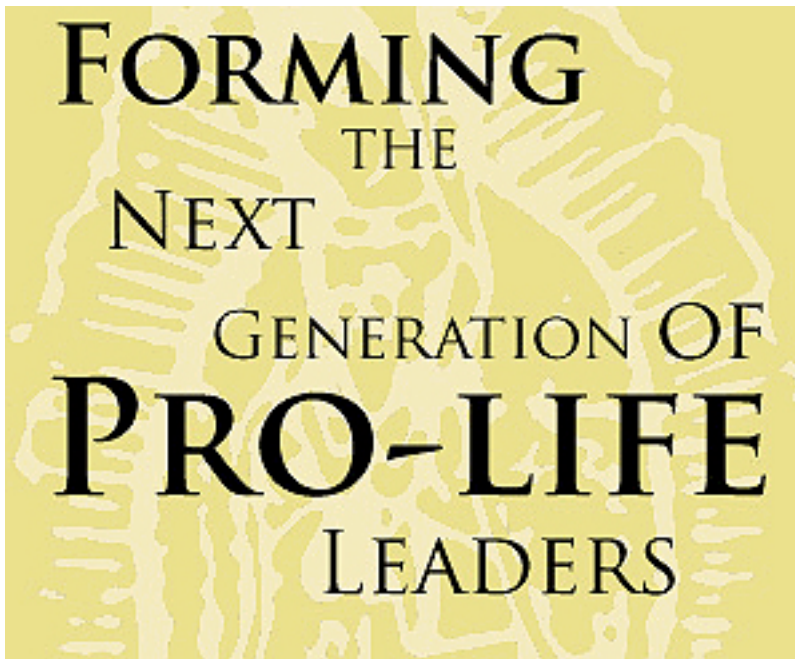


Irish government rejects UN abortion demands



October 11, 2011 (LifeSiteNews.com) -

Following intense criticism of the passive response of the Irish Minister for Justice to last Thursday's call for Ireland to legalize abortion at a major UN hearing, the government has now said that it will reject those recommendations attacking Ireland's pro-life laws.

At the UN meeting, delegates from Britain, Denmark, Spain and other countries had called for Ireland to legalize abortion - with Denmark calling for legislation to allow for abortion on demand. The countries pointed to a controversial ruling by the European Court of Human Rights in the famous A,B,C case, that demanded that Ireland introduce legislation to allow abortion in cases when the mother's life is in danger.

In response, Minister for Justice Alan Shatter had claimed that the Irish Supreme Court had decided that it was lawful to terminate a pregnancy in Ireland when it is necessary to preserve the life of the mother, and that the government would address the issue and meet their obligations under the Convention on Human Rights – a muted response that was slammed by pro-life advocates.

“Minister Shatter did not refer to the fact that the majority of Irish people oppose abortion, and that the people, rather than the European Court, decide Ireland's pro-life laws,” said Niamh Uí Bhriain of the Life Institute at the time. “And he failed to point out that Ireland's leading medical experts had confirmed - before a parliamentary committee - that abortion was never medically necessary.”

Yesterday the UN published its draft outcome report from the Universal Periodic Review of Ireland's human rights record, which revealed that Ireland had rejected 15 of the UNs recommendations, including all the recommendations relating to abortion.

The decision was welcomed by Uí Bhriain. “Today's decision to reject the demands at the UN for Ireland to legalise abortion are a result of the huge numbers of people who contacted their

representatives to insist that we continue to protect our unborn children,” she said.

“But,” she continued, “Minister Shatter’s comments at the UN hearing were very unsatisfactory and are still a cause for concern.” Ui Bhriain said that pro-lifers need to be on “high alert” against the ongoing pressure on the country to legalize abortion.

Youth Defence, who worked with the Life Institute on raising pro-life concerns within the UN review, said they wanted to thank the many thousands of Irish pro-life activists who had spoken up at public meetings, in submissions and directly to the government representatives. “It’s amazing to see just how powerful the people can be when they speak up,” said spokeswoman Katie Robinson. “It’s testament to how perseverance can change politics and how a refusal to compromise on abortion can win victories for unborn children and their mothers.”

“We’ll need to harness that commitment to protecting the unborn again and again in the coming months as we work to ensure that the measures undertaken by the government on the European Court,” said the Youth Defence spokeswoman. “We’ve a lot done and a lot more to do”.

In their response to today’s news the Irish Family Planning Association said the State’s rejection of the abortion recommendations from the UN hearing meant it was sending “mixed messages” on how it wished to implement the ruling of the European Court. The abortion campaigners called on the Irish government to give a firm commitment to provide legislation for adequate abortion services and to give clarity to women and their doctors.

John Jalsevac