



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
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REFERENCE: KS/CRC

30 May 2014

Your Excellencies,

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has been made aware that the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference for its meeting in June has received a proposal for a pilot project on counselling for children of Catholic priests.

In that respect, you may be interested to know that the situation of children of Catholic priests was discussed in January 2014 during the dialogue between the Committee and the delegation of the Holy See on the second periodic report of the Holy See under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/VAT/2). The Committee would like to draw the Bishops' attention to paragraphs 33 and 34 of its Concluding Observations related to articles 7 and 8 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/VAT/CO/2):

“33. The Committee is concerned about the situation of children born of Catholic priests, who, in many cases, are not aware of the identity of their fathers. The Committee is also concerned that the mothers may obtain a plan for regular payment from the Church until the child is financially independent only if they sign a confidentiality agreement not to disclose any information.

34. The Committee recommends that the Holy See assess the number of children born of Catholic priests, find out who they are and take all the necessary measures to ensure the rights of these children to know and to be cared for by their fathers, as appropriate. The Committee also recommends that the Holy See ensure that churches no longer impose confidentiality agreements when providing mothers with financial plans to support their children.”

The Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference
Attn: Archbishop Diarmuid Martin
Archbishop's House.
Drumcondra
Dublin 9



The Committee on the Rights of the Child is confident that while studying the situation of children of Catholic priests, the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference will give full consideration to the recommendations to the Holy See in this respect.

Please accept, Your Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kirsten Sandberg".

Kirsten Sandberg
Chairperson
Committee on the Rights of the Child