

Helen McEntee TD
Minister for Justice,
Minister's Office
51 St Stephen's Green
Dublin 2

9 June 2023

Report of the Review Group to Examine the Offences against the State Acts

Dear Minister,

1. I write in relation to the report of the Independent Review Group to examine the Offences against the State Acts. The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) welcomed your appointment of six experts to the Group in February 2021 and we have been active in contributing to Group's stakeholder consultations.
2. ICCL is long on record as having considerable concerns about the operation of the Special Criminal Court and its impact on the fair trial rights of accused persons in Ireland. We consider that reform is urgent and vital if Ireland is to uphold its obligations under national and international human rights law, in particular in relation to the right to a fair trial and to right to equality before the law.
3. We have long awaited the recommendations of the Review Group, which was initially expected to report in mid-2022. We understand that the report of the Group has now been submitted to Government.
4. Given the strong public interest in the recommendations in the report and the importance of ensuring adequate time for robust public debate before the Oireachtas votes to renew provisions of the Offences against the State Act in the next few weeks, we urge you to publish the report immediately.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Liam Herrick', written in a cursive style.

Liam Herrick
Executive Director
Irish Council for Civil Liberties