



UN Human Rights Council
Thirtieth Session
14 September – 2 October 2015

Item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Mr. President

Too often this Council addresses human rights situations only after a human rights disaster in which bodies have been broken, lives shattered and communities damaged. This Council must contribute to preventing such a disaster in Burundi.¹

After more than a decade of relative peace and stability following the end of the civil war, Burundi is once again in the midst of political crisis and risks a return to internal armed conflict. Last Monday, the High Commissioner for Human Rights warned that if nothing is done, the consequences for Burundi and the Great Lakes region could be disastrous. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence on his mission to Burundi² to this session highlights the need for serious efforts to redress past violations in order to end the tradition of impunity and protect human rights in the present and future.

Amnesty International urges that the Human Rights Council adopt a resolution at this session about the human rights situation in Burundi that:

- Draws the attention of the UN Security Council and other relevant bodies to real possibility that the human rights situation in Burundi will deteriorate rapidly and calls for urgent measures to prevent that deterioration;
- Strongly condemns human rights violations committed in Burundi, including torture and ill-treatment in detention, and the excessive use of force by police, and urges the Burundian authorities to conduct impartial and independent investigations with a view to bringing those responsible to justice;

¹ This statement is based on Amnesty International's written statement to the 30th session of the un human rights council: "*The Human Rights Council should help prevent a human rights crisis in Burundi*" and "*Le Conseil des droits de l'homme doit agir pour prévenir une crise des droits humains au Burundi*", 14 September 2015, Index number: AFR 16/2439/2015 at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr16/2439/2015/en/> and <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr16/2439/2015/fr/>

² Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, Pablo de Greiff, Addendum, Mission to Burundi (8–16 December 2014). UN document: A/HRC/30/42/ADD.1, of 10 August 2015.

- Ensures that the HRC be kept regularly informed of developments on the ground, including by requesting the High Commissioner for Human Rights to present a written report s to the thirty-first and thirty-third sessions of the Human Rights Council;

This Council should also stand ready to convene an urgent debate and take action on the human rights situation in Burundi should the situation further deteriorate.

This is one occasion when the Human Rights Council can act to prevent gross and systematic human rights violations in a country. If any state or group of states stands in the way of this Council taking meaningful action to prevent further deterioration of the situation in Burundi, then it will share responsibility for the consequences. If other Council members sit on their hands and do nothing they too will share responsibility.

Thank you Mr. President.