



European Union

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

30th Session

(14 September – 2 October 2015)

Item 4

Statement by

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Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg

on behalf of the European Union

Geneva, 21 September 2015

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

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EU Statement

Human Rights situation that require the Council's attention

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: Montenegro, Albania and Liechtenstein.

The European Union is highly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide and welcomes this opportunity to discuss some human rights situations that require the Council's attention.

With regard to the situations in the **Syrian Arab Republic** and **Ukraine** we would like to refer to our interventions in the respective interactive dialogues.

The European Union is deeply concerned about the human rights and the humanitarian situation in **Burundi**, in particular by the continuous restrictions on independent media, excessive use of force which was employed against demonstrators by the Burundian security forces, arbitrary detentions, allegations of severe ill-treatment of those in detention and a general climate of intimidation for opposition parties, journalists and civil society. Numerous reports of serious human rights violations and abuses committed by increasingly violent illegally armed groups and individuals, which include summary executions, abductions, torture, beatings, and death threats, are also deeply worrying. The EU recalls that all those responsible for acts of violence and violations of human rights must be held accountable before justice.

The gravity of the situation requires a robust response by this Council; we therefore support the establishment of an effective mechanism to monitor and report on the human rights situation in Burundi.

The EU is extremely concerned about the further deterioration of the human rights and the humanitarian situation in **Sudan** including through the continuing conflicts and restrictions to humanitarian access in the conflict areas of Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. We are particularly concerned by extrajudicial killing of protesters, continued use of arbitrary detention and torture, restrictions on the media, violations of the right to freedom of religion or belief, gender-based violence, as well as indiscriminate bombings, targeting of civilians and humanitarian aid workers. The lack of accountability for these violations must be addressed. The government's actions also undermine its stated commitment to a genuine and inclusive national dialogue. The situation clearly requires continued attention by the Council. The EU supports the extension of the mandate of the Independent expert on Sudan, and calls on Sudan to fully cooperate with the mandate and grant access to all parts of the country.

Regarding **Egypt**, the EU remains seriously concerned about the growing number of death sentences and recent executions, over reports of enforced disappearances, the referral of civilians to military courts, the prolonged pre-trial detentions and the poor detention conditions. The EU is also seriously concerned about terrorist activities and conflict in Egypt and in the region and their severe consequences on lives of Egyptians. At the same time the EU calls on the authorities to tackle the threat of terrorism in full respect of the rule of law. The EU also calls on the Egyptian authorities to respect freedom of expression and of association and assembly, enshrined in the Egyptian constitution. Disproportionate sentences against demonstrators and prominent activists, restrictions on freedom of expression, sentencing of journalists and increased pressure on civil society continue to be reason of grave concern.

In **China**, the recent mass arrest of human rights lawyers and human rights defenders has raised serious questions about its commitment to strengthening the rule of law. China should release all those detained for seeking to protect the rights of others and for exercising their freedom of expression and association, including Liu Xiaobo, Ilham Tohti, Gao Yu and Pu Zhiqiang. China should also promote an enabling environment for civil society activity and take into account deep concerns about the draft law on foreign NGOs and the recently adopted national security law. Lastly, the EU urges China to address the root causes of unrest and foster dialogue with and between different ethnic groups, especially in Tibet and Xinjiang.

The EU deplores the ongoing crackdown on civil society by the **Russian Federation**. Intimidation and harassment against the opposition and the independent media are a cause of concern. The way

freedom of expression and freedom of association in particular are restricted by the authorities is not in line with the UN human rights instruments.

The EU urges the Russian authorities to free the persons abducted from outside Russia, illegally detained and put on trial there, such as Nadiya Savchenko, and in the case of Eston Kohver, Oleg Sentsov and Alexander Kolchenko, who have been already convicted, in direct violation of international law and elementary standards of justice.

Finally, regarding the situation in the **Occupied Palestinian Territory**, the EU remains gravely concerned at the continuing tensions and violence on the ground. We are also concerned that administrative detention is used widely and for prolonged periods. The principles of due process apply to all persons. The EU believes that compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, by States and non-State actors, including accountability, is a cornerstone for peace and security. The future development of the EU relations with both the Israeli and Palestinian partners will also depend on their engagement towards a lasting peace based on a two-State solution.