



Oral statement by FIACAT co-sponsored by AEDH, CCPR Centre, EurAc, Protection International and OMCT

Item 4 - Interactive dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi

42nd session of the Human Rights Council - 17 September 2019

Thank you, Mr. President,

The signatory organisations¹ remain concerned about the serious human rights violations in Burundi.

Among other things, the political intolerance that prevails in connection with the 2020 elections should be raised. Indeed, members of opposition political parties are persecuted. Burundian justice is used to sentence opposition members to harsh sentences for unfounded reasons. On 11 August 2019, 12 members of the opposition party UPD-Zigamibanga were arrested by police officers on charges of holding an unauthorized meeting. They were then sentenced to 30 and 20 years in prison for attempting to overthrow institutions.

In addition, several fires of the offices of these parties by the Imbonerakure have been recorded as that of the National Congress for Freedom headquarters in Nyabiraba during the night of 15 to 16 June 2019.

The situation of Burundians who fled to Tanzania is also worrying. On 27 August 2019, the Tanzanian Minister of the Interior announced that the repatriation of all Burundian refugees would begin on 1 October. This agreement could lead to violations of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Finally, the signatory organisations strongly condemn the confirmation on appeal of Germain Rukuki's sentence of 32 years' imprisonment for his work as a defender within ACAT Burundi and the continued detention of Nestor Nibitanga of APRODH sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment.

Thus, the signatory organizations, particularly concerned about the risk of an intensification of the crisis in the context of the 2020 elections, call on the members of the Council to renew the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry.

They also call on the Burundian authorities to put an end to the serious human rights violations in Burundi and to release Germain Rukuki and Nestor Nibitanga immediately and unconditionally.

Thank you very much.

¹ ACAT Burundi, AEDH, AJBE, APRODH, CAVIB, CB-CPI, CDDH, CCPR Centre, COSOME, EurAc, FIACAT, FOCODE, FORSC, MFFPS, OMCT, Protection international, RCP, SOS-Torture / Burundi, et UBJ