ORAL STATEMENT

Item [2]: ENHANCED INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERITREA

The Human Rights Council must elevate its action against the severe human rights situation in Eritrea

UN Human Rights Council
Fifty-six session

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Thank you, Mr. President.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry (COI) in Eritrea. The COI found that crimes under international law may have been committed in Eritrea, including crimes against humanity such as enslavement, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, other inhumane acts, persecution, rape, and murder.

A decade later, the findings and recommendations of the COI remain relevant and unimplemented. The forced national service, characterized by slavery-like conditions, torture, arbitrary arrest, forced labor, sexual abuse, and other human rights violations, continued in 2024.¹ The civic space in Eritrea remains non-existent.

Eritreans who have escaped these horrific realities continue to face further violations in neighbouring countries. In its latest report, the Special Rapporteur provided updates on how Eritrean refugees in Sudan, especially women and girls, were subjected to grave violations, including sexual violence and domestic servitude attributed to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The Illegal Migration Act passed in the United Kingdom in July 2023 puts at risk Eritrean asylum seekers who arrive in the country irregularly.

At the 56th session of the UN Human Rights Council, states should act to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea and step-up efforts towards accountability, including to ensure collection and preservation of evidence for future accountability processes.

Question: Mr. Special Rapporteur what steps by this Council can help you strengthen the documentation and preservation of evidence?

¹ ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-eritrea