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## ORAL STATEMENT

### ITEM 2: ENHANCED INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERITREA

#### THE HRC SHOULD CONDEMN FORCED RETURN OF ERITREAN REFUGEES

UN Human Rights Council  
Fifty-eighth session  
27 February 2025

#### **Thank you, Mr. President.**

Over the past year, Amnesty International has monitored the continued arbitrary detention and summary deportation of Eritrean refugees. Credible reports from Ethiopia indicate that within the last 3 months alone, more than 600 Eritreans have been forcibly returned to Eritrea.<sup>1</sup>

The human rights situation of Eritrean refugees remains dire, not only in Ethiopia but also in Sudan, where ongoing conflict has led to severe violations, as documented by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea. We recall the Special Rapporteur's June 2024 report, which detailed grave violations against Eritrean refugees, particularly women and girls in Sudan, in areas controlled by the Rapid Support Forces.

Additionally, in August 2024, Amnesty International documented Türkiye's forced return of around 180 Eritreans to Eritrea, violating their legal right to protection and the principle of non-refoulement.

One of the human rights violations that causes many Eritreans to flee from Eritrea is the country's decades-long forced and indefinite conscription, which amounts to forced labour, and at times amounts to slavery.

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<sup>1</sup>BBC Sounds, "Why is Ethiopia deporting hundreds of Eritreans?" 13 December 2024, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0kbvjy9> ;  
GYEM Editorial, "Regarding the deportation of Eritreans from Ethiopia by the Federal Government of Ethiopia" 27 December 2024, <https://eriyaki.com/2024/12/27/gyem-editorial-regarding-the-deportation-of-eritreans-from-ethiopia-by-the-federal-government-of-ethiopia/>

In February 2025 credible media reports stated that the Eritrean government has intensified military mobilization.<sup>2</sup> This follows escalating tensions between Ethiopian and Eritrean officials that have endangered Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia. Amnesty International urges all member states of the Council to uphold their obligations to protect Eritrean refugees from forced return, detention, and abuse.

Special Rapporteur, next year will mark 10 years since the Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea found that crimes under international law may have occurred in Eritrea. We have seen no progress since these findings, what steps should this Council take to review the implementation of these recommendations with a view to supporting accountability for violations?

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<sup>2</sup> BBC News, "Eritrea calls in former army personnel for training and maintains a way for citizens to leave the country" 21 February 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c4g05y33k13o>