

**AMNESTY
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**UN Human Rights Council
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**Item 4:
Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea**

Mr President

The Commission of Inquiry's findings are damning, yet tally with violations of human rights that organizations have reported in Eritrea for many years, including arbitrary arrests and incommunicado detention, enforced disappearances, torture, extrajudicial killings, forced labour in indefinite national service and restrictions on the freedoms of expression and religion.

For twenty-two years, the government has systematically crushed any opposition, silenced all dissent and punished all who refuse to conform. Yesterday the Council heard how even members of the Commission have faced threats and intimidation while in Geneva.

Some violations documented by the Commission may amount to crimes against humanity, necessitating further investigations with a view to accountability, including bringing those suspected of criminal responsibility to trial. In addition, with the continued harassment of Eritreans in exile, and given that Eritrea continues to deny access to independent human rights monitors, the written and oral testimonies that hundreds of witnesses shared with the Commission are an invaluable source of evidence that could provide a basis for future accountability.

Amnesty International urges the Council to ensure follow-up to build on the Commission's findings by strengthening the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea, including through the establishment of a database of human rights violations in Eritrea. We continue to urge Eritrea to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur and to implement the comprehensive recommendations received during its UPR, from other human rights mechanisms, the Special Rapporteur and the Commission.

Finally Mr President

As the High Commissioner noted last week, while paying attention to the human rights violations behind the flight of 5,000 Eritreans every month, the international community must continue to provide protection to all those that flee, in line with their non-refoulement obligations. The human rights situation must remain central to States' assessment of Eritrea and continue to guide all proposed changes in asylum law and policy.

Thank you.