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ORAL STATEMENT
ITEM 4: Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Burundi

BURUNDI: CONTINUED IMPUNITY AMID SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE

UN Human Rights Council
Fifty-fourth session
11 September – 13 October 2023

Mr President,

Amnesty International thanks the Special Rapporteur for his report, which highlights the lack of improvement in Burundi's human rights situation.

Burundi's continued refusal to engage with the mandate, reaffirmed once again by its recent rejection of UPR recommendations to that effect, is deeply disappointing.

We share the Special Rapporteur's concerns about the persistence of human rights violations and abuses in a climate of impunity. We urge Burundi to reconsider its rejection of recommendations made under the UPR, that echo those by this mandate and various treaty bodies, to investigate and, where there is sufficient evidence, prosecute members of the security forces and Imbonerakure accused of extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture, and other ill-treatment.

We also share the Special Rapporteur's concerns about continued serious restrictions on civic space and the media. Journalist Floriane Irangabiye, currently serving a ten-year prison sentence on account of comments made in an online radio show, is one of numerous media workers and human rights defenders arrested in recent years for exercising their right to freedom of expression. She should be immediately and unconditionally released.

Looking ahead to the 2025 elections, the Special Rapporteur has called for the establishment of crisis prevention mechanisms. In his view, what would be needed for such a mechanism to be effective?

Thank you, Mr President.