



**29th session of the
Human Rights Council**

**Response to High Commissioner's Update
15 June 2015
Delivered by Renate Bloem**

Thank you Mr. President,

High Commissioner, CIVICUS warmly welcomes your very rich update this morning and your passionate and unrelenting efforts to address the crumbling of freedom, equality and justice or what you named “the everything else” in so many corners of the world. We equally underline your call for a comprehensive solution oriented debate on the catastrophic migration crisis in Europe and South East Asia.

We emphasize your triple urgent warning call to the **Burundian** Government to abstain from a blown up full civil war, from killing and torturing civilians and to get away with the death lists.

As CIVICUS, we particular thank you for your strong pledge and support for **Civil Society** and **HRDs**. They must be **enabled** not **impeded** in performing their functions.

In this context we call your attention to the alarming development of the rapidly increasing legal persecution and harassment campaign by the government and investigating bodies in **Egypt** against independent civil society, predominantly human rights organizations and groups. We are particularly concerned about Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies and we ask you to follow this development very closely.

Since August 2014, the Government of **Azerbaijan** has orchestrated an unprecedented campaign to suppress dissenting voices in the country. While we welcome the release of opposition journalist Emin Huseynov (after having been sheltered for 10 months at the Swiss Embassy), we deplore that several dozen HRDs, including bloggers, journalists, peaceful political activists and others remain behind bars. We are grateful for the Norwegian initiative to address HRDs in Detention in a joint statement.

Finally, High Commissioner, we have brought before you and your predecessor the no ending crackdown on pro-democracy activists in **Bahrain**. We thank you for having raised your concern about the harsh Jaw Prison conditions and particular for detainees Sheikh Ali al-Salman and Nabeel Rajab and for having reminded Bahrain to follow the UPR recommendations and those of its own Commission of Inquiry. We also call on you to follow the Bahrain situation very closely and for bringing regular updates to the Council.

Thank you