



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

Item 4

Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea
23 June 2015

Delivered by Suleiman Hussein

Thank you, Mr. President,

CIVICUS and Citizens for Democratic Rights in Eritrea welcome the CoI's landmark report and the Council's stalwart commitment to addressing persistent and grave human rights violations in Eritrea.

We commend the CoI for ensuring an inclusive and comprehensive approach based on hundreds of interviews and written submissions from a diverse range of victims, civil society and UN stakeholders. However, despite the courageousness of many victims to engage with the CoI, we remain deeply concerned about the very real specter of reprisals against potential witnesses for cooperating with the CoI. It is incumbent upon all stakeholders to take the necessary measures to ensure that individuals and their families are not subjected to targeted state persecution for engaging with the CoI.

Mr President,

The report of the CoI presents indisputable evidence of gross human rights violations perpetrated by the government in Eritrea. Systematic restrictions on the right to freedom of movement, opinion, expression and religion and the persistent use of extra-judicial killings, conscription and force labor are illustrative of the government's complete and flagrant disregard for human rights and the rule of law. Without recourse to address these issues nationally, thousands of Eritreans continue to flee the country to escape unchecked and brutal repression.

The protracted nature of these violations demands the unflinching attention of the international community. We therefore strongly reiterate our full support for the recommendations put forward by the CoI and further urge the Council to renew the mandate of the CoI to investigate crimes against humanity committed by the state as suggested in the report presented today.

Thank you Mr. President.