



27<sup>th</sup> session of the  
Human Rights Council  
Item 6

**Adoption of Cote d'Ivoire's UPR Report:  
Delivered by Rolince Mbungu**

Thank you Mr. President,

CIVICUS welcomes Cote d'Ivoire's adoption of a number of recommendations to create a more enabling environment for civil society and ensure that the fundamental rights of all Ivoirians are respected and protected. We acknowledge attempts made by the government to end impunity and to hold to account those who are guilty of violating the rights of citizens. We recognise the enactment of the bill to protect human rights defenders but urge that it is implemented accordingly and objectively.

However, despite Cote d'Ivoire's explicit commitments during its UPR examination, the government has simultaneously taken steps to limit the space for civil society and freedom of expression and the media at the national level. The exclusion of individuals aligned to the government in efforts to combat impunity is a major concern.

Freedom of expression is still restricted and threats to and intimidation of journalists persist. We are concerned about the deaths of journalists Sylvain Gagnetaud and Désire Oué as well as the arrests and detentions of others for simply publishing reports critical of government actions. We are also concerned about the decision by the government to ban newspapers for publishing reports considered sensitive and the use of pro-government media to harass activists and journalists.

We therefore urge the Ivoirian government to take all necessary measures to implement recommendations it accepted to prevent the harassment of journalists and civil society activists. The right to freedom of expression must be respected and guaranteed at all times during this transition.

Thank you, Mr. President