



**UN Human Rights Council
21st session
Item 3**

**Panel Discussion on Intimidation and Reprisals
Statement delivered by Renate Bloem, CIVICUS UN Representative, Geneva**

Thank you Mr Vice-President

CIVICUS wishes to thank the organiser, Hungary, and the very creative panellists for this most timely discussion on reprisals. We want to reiterate: reprisals against people who cooperate with United Nations mechanisms in protecting and advancing human rights are absolutely unacceptable; reprisals are a mockery of the United Nations.

We applaud the Secretary-General's clear and outspoken language in his report on this issue and the High Commissioner's strong appeals against reprisals, the latest in Bahrain. We have saluted the President of the Council when she reminded the Bahrain government of their responsibility to protect their citizens after a Bahraini newspaper launched threats against those who had participated in the May Universal Periodic Review (UPR) session upon their return.

But we have to now move from rhetorical description to action. As the High Commissioner said, we need now a coherent strategy which should include:

- early warning;
- preventive action in accordance with States' responsibility to protect;
- employing all tools available to Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and to this Council, such as issuing statements and resolutions, or creating Commissions of Inquiries.

In this regard we call on the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to compile all constructive proposals made today into draft guiding principles as a basis for follow up discussion.

Finally, we call on all future Presidents of the UN Human Rights Council to use their good offices to speak against reprisals at each session, in particular during UPR working groups, to create a culture of the promotion and protection of human rights that this Council was established to uphold.

We thank the current President and former President Uhomoibhi for setting such great examples.

Thank you for your attention.