

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on ERITREA

26th Session of the Human Rights Council – 16th June 2014

STATEMENT BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Mr. President,

The Czech Republic supports the statement delivered by the European Union.

We welcome the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea and would like to thank for her detailed report in which she focuses on different aspects of the national service and the detention and prison system in Eritrea. We studied carefully the disturbing findings and in concurrence with her recommendations we call on the Government of Eritrea to ratify and implement the Convention against Torture and its Optional Protocol and to improve immediately the horrific conditions of detainees, in particular of women and children.

The report submitted to this Council mentions Eritrea's engagement in the review of its human rights record within the UPR working group. While noting the poor performance with regard to implementing the recommendations made during the first review in 2009, we encourage the Government to implement the recommendations of the current cycle.

We deeply regret lack of improvement and continuing massive human rights violations which include arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings and torture, infringement to freedoms of expression, opinion, association or assembly.

We would like to express our concern over the fate of numerous refugees leaving Eritrea who often fall victim to human trafficking and kidnapping. We realize that the indefinite national service and arbitrary arrests and detention are the main push factors for fleeing the country. We would appreciate receiving more information on the steps taken by the Government of Eritrea on national, regional and international levels to address this issue.

In her report, Madame Special Rapporteur invited the international community to advocate for the improvement of the human rights situation in Eritrea. *We would like to hear more about her cooperation with African regional mechanisms and their influence on the situation.*

We regret that despite several requests of the Special Rapporteur to visit the country, Eritrea has not responded positively. We therefore urge the Government to start cooperating fully with her and to allow the country visit.

We would like to assure Madame Special Rapporteur of our full support to her work and to the extension of her mandate.

Thank you.