

## ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO RWANDA

### **CZECH REPUBLIC**

- How does the Government ensure and plan to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, especially in the case of "sensitive" trials of political figures?
- How is the Government addressing the problem of unofficial detention centres? How is it ensuring control over the condition of the detainees and protection of their rights? What steps are being taken to prevent torture and other ill-treatment? How is ensured the investigation of cases of arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions and torture and punishment of perpetrators of such acts?
- What measures has the Government adopted to guarantee the freedom of speech and the independence of the media? How is the Government ensuring protection of journalists and human rights defenders in this regard?
- How is the Government strengthening implementation of electoral rights with a view to meet the international standards of democratic election? What further steps will be taken to guarantee the equal access to all stages of the election process as, e.g., granting registration of the political parties and equal access to election campaigns?

### **GERMANY**

- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which Rwanda is a State Party, sets out the right of everyone to adequate food. Despite steady economic growth and foreign aid from donors, chronic malnutrition of children is reported to remain widespread. 38 % of children under the age of five are reported to be suffering from stunting. How does the Government of Rwanda plan to tackle this issue and fulfill a child's right to adequate food?
- There have been allegations of arbitrary detention and ill-treatment of persons in the detention center known locally as the "Gikondo Transit Center" in Kigali. Many of the persons in detention there stem from the most marginalized groups of society. The ill-treatment that has reportedly taken place includes on one hand violence against persons in detention and living conditions that do not conform to Rwanda's international legal obligations. Are there any plans to thoroughly investigate the allegations of arbitrary detention and to put in place measures to prevent such incidents in the future?

### **NETHERLANDS**

Unlawful detention and disappearances

With reference to paragraphs 18, 19 and 23 of the OHCHR report (summary of the stakeholders),

- Could the government of Rwanda react to accusations that vulnerable people are unlawfully detained, as for example in the Gikondo Transit Centre?
- Does the government have any intentions to set up a legal framework for the Gikondo Transit Centre, as well as for those being directed to this facility ?
- Which steps will the government of Rwanda take to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions, enforced disappearances and torture?

#### Civic space

- In light of paragraph 37, 39, 40 and 41 of the OHCHR report (summary of the stakeholders) and Rwanda's accepted recommendations at the UPR review in 2011 on these matters, does the Government of Rwanda have plans to simplify and improve the legal framework for NGOs, making registration less burdensome and to provide for a more vibrant civil society? (registration procedures at the *Rwanda Development Board* for companies would be an excellent example of how the registration process could be simplified)

#### Media

- Regarding the concerns about freedom of media raised in paragraph 30, 31 and 32 of the OHCHR report (summary of the stakeholders) and in light of the 2013 reforms on media regulation, how does the Rwandan government see the progress of media self-regulation and the role of the Rwanda Media Commission since 2013?

#### Abortion

- With reference to a recently published research about access to safe abortion and the harmful consequences of illegal abortions ('When Abortion is a Crime: Rwanda' by the *Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development*), and ongoing (media) discussions about easing the process of seeking legal abortion and claiming that data in the above mentioned research are incorrect, could the Government of Rwanda explain what steps will be made to ensure easier access to safe abortion for women and girls and to avoid that women and girls have to seek illegal abortions?

#### Accountability for human rights violations

With great appreciation for the government of Rwanda's strong commitment to the principle of Responsibility to Protect, the Netherlands would like to ask Rwanda the following questions:

- What steps does the government of Rwanda take to hold accountable those who commit human rights abuses?
- Will the government consider ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance to ensure accountability for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes?

## **SLOVENIA**

- We note that despite the adoption of gender equality legislation and the laudable fact that Rwanda has the highest proportion of women members of parliament in the world, patriarchal stereotypes regarding gender roles continue to hamper gender equality in practice. What is the Government doing to counter attitudes and practices that undermine women's equal rights?
- We understand that the current Family Law stipulates that the husband is the head of the family. Will this be remedied in the new family code that is under preparation?
- What measures is the Government taking to prevent and redress discrimination against the Batwa population?
- How does the Government enforce the prohibition of corporal punishment in view of the "right of correction" granted to parents under the Civil Code?

## **SWEDEN**

- How will the Government of Rwanda ensure the implementation of the 2013 media reform legislation, including the independence of Rwanda Media Commission?
- What measures have been taken to implement the recommendations of the UN special rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (A/HRC/26/29/Add.2)?
- Does the Government of Rwanda intend to sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances?
- What steps are the Government of Rwanda taking in order to 1) increase the political participation of women at local levels and the representation of women in key roles where policies are adopted and implemented, as well as to 2) safeguard access to enable the possibility for safe and legal abortions?

## **UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

- Noting the completion of the Gacaca process and the initiative to digitise the records of that process, could the Government of Rwanda confirm when the Gacaca archives will be completely open and accessible to the public without the need for special permissions?
- In the context of Rwanda's openness to hosting vulnerable populations fleeing violence in their home countries and as set out in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, can the Government of Rwanda set out the steps it is taking to

prevent recruitment of refugees into armed groups and guarantee the civilian nature of refugee camps?

- Could the government provide an update on their investigations into the cases of missing people, given reports of enforced disappearances and mistreatment in detention of individuals, principally from north-western Rwanda, in 2014?
- In the context of media reform that has taken place since the last Universal Periodic Review, could the government provide a timeline for the approval and implementation of the Prime Minister's Order on Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), as a step to further strengthen freedom of expression?

## **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

- We commend Rwanda for the steps it has taken on media reform, in particular for passing the 2013 media law. However, we note with concern reports that journalists continue to face harassment for reporting information deemed critical of the government, and that in May the chairman of the Rwanda Media Commission resigned and left the country after alleged threats from government officials. What steps is the government taking to ensure that journalists are able to work without fear of interference, and to establish the Rwanda Media Commission as an independent self-regulatory body?
- We commend Rwanda for registering the Democratic Green Party, and for amending laws governing political party registration to remove the requirement that parties join the National Consultative Forum of Political Organizations. Is the government planning on any further reforms to ensure an inclusive political process and that a diversity of opinion and political views are presented to Rwandan voters ahead of the presidential elections in 2017?
- What steps is Rwanda taking to address credible allegations of ill-treatment and prolonged, arbitrary detention of individuals at the Gikondo Transit Center? Will Rwanda establish a mechanism for judicial review of the legality of any detention and oversight of the care of individuals held in Gikondo and other centers, such as the Gitagata Youth Center and the Iwawa Island Rehabilitation and Vocational Development Center?
- What steps is Rwanda taking to investigate reports of enforced disappearance, prolonged arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment in military intelligence and other undeclared detention facilities and hold those responsible accountable?
- We welcome Rwanda's efforts to expand Internet access throughout the country. What steps is Rwanda taking to avoid content-based restriction of websites, including websites critical of Rwandan government policies?