



**UN Human Rights Council  
32<sup>nd</sup> Session, Item 6**

**UPR report Adoption: Somalia  
24 June 2016  
Delivered by Renate Bloem**

Thank you Mr President,

CIVICUS applauds Somalia's cooperation and engagement with the UPR process. We also take this opportunity to remember the passing of Ambassador Bari Bari and the important contributions he made to the advancement of human rights both within the Council and at home.

While acknowledging the very real and substantial challenges the Government of Somalia faces in consolidating democratic space and creating accountable State institutions inflicted by 20 years of civil war, we also urge the Government and the international community to take concerted measures to realize the important progressive civic space recommendations accepted by Somalia's during its UPR.

Somalia remains one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a journalist. In the past 5 years, at least 23 journalists have been killed. While we recognize the government's recent steps to address impunity, including the conviction of 6 individuals for the murder of journalist Hinda Haji Mohamed, we urge the government to ensure that all international due process and fair trial standards are upheld in these and other judicial proceedings.

To this end, we urge the government to engage with civil society and members of media to ensure the full realization of all recommendation on protecting journalist and other media workers, including by:

Fully guaranteeing freedom of expression and the press, in particular by conducting credible and effective investigations into allegations of detentions, harassment and abuses against journalists in Somalia (136.107)

Despite the laudable decision to implement this and other recommendations, we express alarm at Somalia's decision not to accept several important recommendations on ending judicial persecution of journalists, human rights defenders and to reopen media outlets which have been arbitrarily dissolved.

The Government, in justifying its rejection of recommendation 136.105, invoked the need to find an appropriate balance between safeguarding national security and human rights. While acknowledging that the specter of insecurity and violence remains pervasive in Somalia, laws governing national security and freedom of expression must be subject to a strict proportionality test in line with international human rights law and should never be used to criminalize dissent or independent reporting. Thank you Mr President.