

**40th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Agenda Item 6: UPR outcome, Central African Republic**

**Organisation:** Christian Solidarity Worldwide

**Speaker:** Ellis Heasley

**Position on list of NGOs:** 2



Thank you, Mr. President.

CSW welcomes the positive manner in which the Central African Republic has engaged with the UPR. However, we remain concerned by the number of reported violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Of particular concern is the targeting of civilians based on their religious or ethnic identity.

The advent of sectarian violence on the grounds of religion is a recent phenomenon in CAR and one that needs addressing. It is crucial that CAR takes steps to promote peaceful coexistence and reconciliation amongst citizens regardless of religion or ethnicity, and we urge the government to ensure the provision of adequate protection for communities that are vulnerable to attack by armed groups.

Recent attacks on IDP camps on or near church properties in Aliando town and Ippy have shown an alarming level of indiscriminate violence against civilians. More than 40 people were killed and over 20,000 were displaced in these attacks.

We recognise the efforts made by the government to restore the authority of the state throughout CAR's territory. However, the presence of armed groups in parts of the country has led to restrictions on freedom of movement and freedom of religion or belief, illegal taxation, and arbitrary detention. We urge the government to establish control over its territory and bring an end to these violations.

We welcome efforts to establish the Special Criminal Court and call on CAR to ensure the court has the necessary resources to execute its mandate.

We also encourage CAR to prioritise the restoration of justice mechanisms at all levels. Combating impunity is a vital component in breaking the cycles of violence and restoring peace.

Thank you.