

Universal Periodic Review 15 – Burundi

Intervention by the Netherlands

Madam President,

The Netherlands would like to thank the government of Burundi for its national report and the extensive explanation of the national human rights situation in Burundi by mr/mrs..... here today.

The Netherlands commends the government of Burundi on its achievements since the last UPR review of Burundi. An impressive wide variety of media and press is presented in the national report. In this respect, the government of the Netherlands wonders how this relates to the new media law that is in progress at the moment, a law presumably more restrictive on media and press freedom in Burundi.

We recommend the government of Burundi to guarantee freedom of the press and therefore to refrain from implementing more restrictive legal measures and policies.

Secondly, the Netherlands urges the government of Burundi to engage in dialogue with opposition parties. The Secretary-General noted the steps made by the government in 2011 to encourage opposition leaders to return and compete. We urge the government to continue this positive trend.

Finally, the Netherlands wants to raise attention for the 2011 education policy, as we recommended in 2008 that the government of Burundi was to take appropriate measures against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. We note with concern that the education policy further entrenched this type of discrimination by giving the possibility to expel students on the basis of their sexual orientation. The Netherlands recommends the government of Burundi to revise this policy.

Thank you, Madam President.