



**Statement by Sweden in the  
interactive dialogue on Eritrea**

*Delivered by Ambassador Jan Knutsson  
Geneva, February 3, 2014*

**Mr President,**

Sweden wishes to thank Ambassador Gerahetu and his delegation for taking an active part in the UPR and refers to the advance questions we raised.

While acknowledging progress on a certain number of health related MDG's, we note with concern that the recommendations on political and civil rights from the last UPR-cycle in 2009 remain to be addressed.

Although Eritrean law provides for freedom of speech and of the press, widespread violations are reported in practice. Following the closure of all independent media in 2001, no independent or private press has been permitted to operate. Several journalists and other persons remain in incommunicado detention, without having their cases presented before a court of law.

Sweden recommends the Government of Eritrea to take measures to fully implement the constitution of 1997 and to ensure the rule of law. Sweden further recommends the Government to take concrete measures to ensure full respect for freedom of expression and of the press and to release persons detained for exercising their freedom of expression, or as a result of their political views.

While welcoming the visit by a Technical Delegation from of the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), we note that the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Eritrea (established in 2012) has not been granted access to Eritrea.

Sweden therefore recommends the Government of Eritrea to take concrete measures to allow the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Eritrea to fully implement her mandate, including granting her unfettered access to the country.

Thank you, Mr. President