



UPR 23, November 4, 2015
Recommendations by Canada for Rwanda's UPR

Recommendations

Canada recommends that Rwanda:

1. Take steps to ensure that all individuals – including members of civil society organizations, the media and the political opposition – are enabled to exercise fully their rights to peaceful assembly, association and freedom of expression, without threat, intimidation or harassment. This includes, but is not limited to, revising laws to facilitate NGO registration and operations, sanctioning excessive interference by State officials, and reforming the Penal Code and national security laws to ensure that provisions related to criminal defamation, libel and insult are consistent with international human rights obligations.
2. Investigate reports and allegations of arbitrary arrest, unlawful detention and forced disappearance of opposition political figures and members of civil society, and prosecute perpetrators.
3. Extend an invitation to the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers to visit Rwanda, to implement a recommendation which was accepted by Rwanda during its 2011 Universal Periodic Review.

Observations

Canada welcomes the steps taken by Rwanda to address a number of the recommendations made during its first Universal Periodic Review, in particular those aimed at the promotion of gender equality and the elimination of violence against women.

However, we remain deeply concerned by reports of enhanced restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as persistent allegations of disappearances, unlawful detentions, arbitrary arrests, ill-treatment, torture and even targeted killings. A functioning political opposition, a vibrant civil society and independent media – all free to operate without fear of intimidation or

reprisal – are essential if Rwanda is to maintain the remarkable gains in economic and social development that have been achieved in the post-Genocide era.