**43rd Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Burundi – 4 May 2023**

Statement by H.E. Christopher Grima, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta to the UN in Geneva

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Mr. President,

Malta welcomes the delegation of Burundi to this session of the Universal Periodic Review.

We thank Burundi for its national report. The human rights situation in Burundi remains of concern. Civic space continues to shrink, and human rights defenders remain threatened, including by being tried in absentia for criticizing the President’s third term in office. While Burundi ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, it is yet to establish an effective national preventive mechanism regarding torture. Additionally, the March 2022 cybercrime law further restricts human rights online and offline. Extrajudicial executions and unlawful deaths continue with apparent impunity.

Malta also expresses its regret that the Burundian authorities have not allowed the HRC Special Rapporteur access to the country.

Malta would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Conduct a comprehensive investigation into allegations of arbitrary arrests, torture and unlawful detention by law enforcement and other national security structures.
2. Allow UN human rights mechanisms and other regional monitors to conduct investigations on allegations of human rights violations across the country, unimpeded and without restrictions.
3. Take all necessary administrative and institutional measures to effectively protect LGBTIQ persons against attacks on their human integrity and against discrimination of all kinds, including access to healthcare services.

We wish Burundi a successful UPR session.