**29th SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP**

**REVIEW OF BURUNDI**

**Statement of Croatia**

Mr. President,

Croatia welcomes the delegation of Burundi and thanks them for the presentation of their report.

We welcome the positive achievements concerning Burundi’s efforts in strengthening the National Human Rights Commission.

We supported the extension of the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, and urge the Government to review its policy of refusing to cooperate with the Commission and to cease threatening its members.

Furthermore, we regret to see the decrease in political stability and security in the country, resulting in a growing number of internally displaced persons.

We share the concern of UN experts regarding the targeting of the legitimate exercise of freedom of expression and freedom of association, including the seemingly arbitrary detention of human rights defender Germain Rukuki.

We remain concerned with the continued practice of gender-based violence, including sexual violence and call upon Burundian authorities to put an immediate end to the serious human rights violations and abuses.

Finally, Croatia regrets Burundi's withdrawal from the International Criminal Court.

Therefore, allow us to address Burundi with three recommendations:

1. **To reconsider its decision to withdraw from the Rome Statute.**
2. **To ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.**
3. **To ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure.**

Croatia would like to compliment the Government of Burundi for the progress achieved and wish them a successful review session.

Thank you.