

Benelux Statement on Situation of human rights in Eritrea
59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 2

Mr. President,

I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. We fully align with the European Union's statement and thank Dr. Babiker for his report.

Dr Babiker,

We share your concerns about the human rights situation in Eritrea. Since our last dialogue, the situation has hardly improved, and human rights violations continue without respite, be it prolonged and incommunicado detentions, enforced disappearances, or kidnappings.

We are alarmed by the increased tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia. An outbreak of a military conflict would have a devastating impact on local populations and further undermine regional security. To initiate a change of direction is imperative and all parties should work towards a consolidated and lasting peace.

Dr Babiker,

Your report indicates a lack of cooperation by the Eritrean authorities. We call upon Eritrea to fully cooperate with your mandate and grant you access to the country without further delay. We also regret the low level of cooperation by certain countries within the region. It is our shared responsibility to facilitate the Council's work.

In this spirit, while we welcome Eritrea's participation in the UPR, we are disappointed by the State party's low acceptance rate of recommendations. We encourage implementation particularly on judicial independence, military service reform, and sexual and gender-based violence. Words must be followed by actions.

Lastly, you have raised the vulnerability of Eritreans outside of their country. How can we better protect diasporas from transnational repression?

I thank you.

[245 words – speaking time: 1.30 minutes]