



26th session of the
Human Rights Council
Item10

**General Debate on the Human Rights Situation in South Sudan
Delivered by Renate Bloem**

Thank you Mr. President

CIVICUS together with South Sudan Law Society and Citizens for Peace and Justice is concerned that the current conflict that first erupted in Juba on 15 December 2013 is approaching its seventh month. International and South Sudanese organizations have documented serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law including attacks against civilians, sexual violence, unlawful detention, extra-judicial killings, torture and the use of child soldiers. An untold number of Civilians have been killed, over 800,000 people are internally displaced within the country and over 270,000 have fled to nearby countries as refugees.

On 30 December 2013, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) called for the creation of a Commission of Inquiry. Since taking office on 7 March 2014, the Commission of Inquiry conducted its first field visit to South Sudan from 21 April to 1 May 2014 and issued a declaration on 15 May 2014 that it is "leaning towards the creation of a hybrid court...to be established jointly by the African Union and the United Nations" to prosecute international crimes. This is an indication of the gravity of the atrocities committed since the outbreak of the conflict. The government has launched several investigations and commissions with the view to hold perpetrators accountable, yet these have not yielded tangible results. To ensure justice and accountability we urge the Human Rights Council to take the following action:

- Provide the AU Commission of Inquiry with an opportunity to brief the Council on its progress, initial recommendations and greatly enhance technical, logistical, and financial support
- Urge the AU Commission of Inquiry to make strong recommendations in its report that will ensure criminal prosecutions for war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- Call for the ratification of core human rights instruments by the Government of South Sudan
- Consider the establishment of a longer term reporting mechanism to the Council;
- Encourage UNMISS to increase the frequency and timeliness of their reporting and also create a direct reporting line to the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) on the human rights situation in South Sudan;

- Provide robust capacity building for the South Sudanese judiciary, department of public prosecution, legal aid services, private lawyers, police and prison services to enable them to handle the prosecutions of human rights violations that have taken place since the outbreak of the conflict
- Consider and support the call for a special or hybrid court with UN assistance to ensure justice and accountability for the mass killings of civilians, ethnic cleansing and other war crimes.

Thank you