



STATEMENT OF THE NETWORK OF AFRICAN NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS FOLLOWING THE DETERIORATING SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURUNDI

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) is a regional umbrella body that brings together 44 National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) across Africa. The Network seeks to support and strengthen NHRIs in Africa by promoting their compliance with the United Nations Paris Principles.

The Network would like to express its support to the work of the Independent National Human Rights Commission of Burundi, which is a member of NANHRI.

The Network also wishes to express its deepest concerns following the ongoing acts of violence and killings that have been taking place in Burundi.

The situation lends itself to gross human rights violations and must be stopped immediately from deteriorating any further. The right to life, the right to security, freedom from torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and the rights to freedom of expression, movement and assembly are all in constant danger, if political and social disorder is left to persist.

Recalling article 6(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which stipulates that *«Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life»*;

Recalling also the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights that provides in its article 4 that *« human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this right»*.

The Network therefore condemns all acts of violence from any side, calls for the observation of human rights, and urges all involved parties to refrain from any act of violence, and to work towards a peaceful and democratic resolution of the conflict.

The Network strongly calls upon the Burundian authorities to demonstrate a high sense of responsibility and to observe the following, as a duty to the Burundian people and the human family:

- i. Respect all international human rights norms and standards to which Burundi is a State Party, and, specifically, uphold non-derogable rights, such as the right to freedom from torture and the right to life;
- ii. Restrain from using excessive force and unnecessary restrictions on the freedom of expression, assembly and peaceful protest;
- iii. Allow for an independent and impartial investigation into the violence that has culminated in the death of many Burundians, and violations of other fundamental human rights;
- iv. Hold accountable, before a court of law, anyone on any side who participate in, plan, or order violence against the civilian population.
- v. Remain open to genuine and constructive political dialogue and effectively collaborate with the African Union and the entire International Community to bring to an end the crisis that has the potential for tremendous implications for the region ;
- vi. Take all necessary measures to ensure security and to protect the rights of all inhabitants.

The Network calls on the East African Community to revitalize the mediation and help launch, without delay, an inclusive Burundian dialogue bringing together all political stakeholders, including opposition in exile, who should draw a roadmap for the resolution of the conflict;

Finally, the Network wishes to call upon international, regional and local human rights defenders to monitor the human rights situation in Burundi for purposes of upholding due process, ensuring accountability and also ensuring that victims access available forms of redress.

Dr. Chemuta Divine BANDA



Chairperson

Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI)

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