

Statement at 40th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 6: Consideration of UPR outcomes – Chad

Speaker: Salma El Housseiny

Mr President,

ISHR takes the opportunity of the adoption of Chad's UPR report to note with satisfaction Chad's acceptance of several recommendations aimed at creating a safe working environment for defenders, to combat attacks and threats they face and guarantee freedom of expression, association and assembly. We also commend the State for its commitment to develop and adopt a law protecting human rights defenders in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. ISHR encourages the state to effectively implement these recommendations through legislative and administrative measures to lift restrictions on the space of civil society in the country.

We welcome the recent reform of the law establishing the National Commission on Human Rights. To fulfill its human rights mandate, the newly created Commission must be independent and fully comply with the Paris Principles.

ISHR remains concerned by the trend towards large-scale use of ministerial decrees banning peaceful protests and events organized by civil society actors. Between 2015 and 2016, 65 organizations were banned from organizing public events. In addition, the Chadian League for Human Rights has recently highlighted that 74 demonstrations have been repressed since 2015.

We encourage the Chadian government to:

- Ensure that the legislative framework and law enforcement agencies guarantee and protect the freedoms of expression and opinion and refrain from intimidating and arresting journalists for their legitimate work.
- Operationalize and provide the necessary resources to ensure the effective functioning of the new National Human Rights Commission and support its compliance with the Paris Principles.

I thank you.