

Human Rights Council 39th session

ITEM 5 GENERAL DEBATE

Speaker: Salma El Hosseiny

We are concerned that several candidate States running for upcoming *Human Rights Council* elections fail to fulfil the minimal requirements for promoting and protecting human rights and in cooperation with this Council and its mechanisms.

In Bahrain, the sweeping travel bans, arbitrary detention and reprisals against defenders engaging with the Council is a demonstration of the authorities' systematic and gross human rights violations happening on the ground.

In Cameroon, government forces are responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, excessive use of force, and arbitrary detention. Despite the escalation of violence in the Anglophone region, *with reports that armed elements have carried out kidnappings, targeted killings of police and local authorities, extortion and have torched schools*, the Cameroon government refuses to grant access to OHCHR to the Northwest and Southwest of the country.

In Eritrea, the authorities continue to commit grave human rights violations, including arbitrary arrest and detention as a form of punishment for legitimate and peaceful exercise of fundamental rights, and they have refused to cooperate with the country mandate.

The Philippines, continues to target *human rights* defenders including UN mandate holders and has refused access to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, despite the thousands of killings in the government's ongoing 'war on drugs', and the lack of independent and impartial investigations in the country.

Electing States with abysmal human rights records undermines the legitimacy and credibility of the Council.

We urge States to refrain from voting for all candidates that blatantly fail to uphold the highest standards of human rights and fail to fully cooperate with this Council.

Thank you.