



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and Establishment of Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea**

The Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, applauds the United Nations Human Rights Council's (UNHRC) decision to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea and the setting up of a landmark Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Eritrea.

Resolution ([A/HRC/26/L.6](#)) renewing the mandate and assigning the COI to investigate the human rights situation in Eritrea for a period of one year was adopted without a vote at the close of the 26<sup>th</sup> UNHRC regular session on 27 June 2014.

Prof Frans Viljoen, Director of the Centre for Human Rights, expressed the hope that “the Human Rights Council's decision would not only increase the possibility for international engagement, but also see to an actual improvement in the human rights situation in Eritrea. I congratulate the Special Rapporteur and her team of researchers at the Centre, for their dedicated work”.

These celebrated milestones come at time when as many as 4000 people are fleeing the country every month in search of a safe haven. Systematic and widespread human rights violations reported in Eritrea include extrajudicial killings, indefinite military service, arbitrary detentions and torture. The Commission of inquiry will be composed of three Commissioners, including the Special Rapporteur.

The renewal of the Special Rapporteur's mandate and the setting up of the COI send a strong message to the Eritrean authorities to account for their unabated disregard for human rights over the years. While welcoming the establishment of the COI, the Centre hopes to see it strengthen and complement the Special Rapporteur's work towards entrenching human rights for the people of Eritrea.



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