

Madame president, the Centre for Human Rights wishes to call the attention of the Human Rights Council to the situation of human rights defenders in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For the last 3 decades, the eastern DRC has been a fertile ground for extra-judicial killings of human rights defenders which often end up not being properly investigated or prosecuted by the government.

On 6 November 2020, the HRC adopted its views in the case of Deborah Kitumaini and Others v the DRC. The committee found that the DRC failed to investigate, prosecute and convict the alleged perpetrators of the assassination of Pascal Kabangulu, a prominent human rights defender in Bukavu, South Kivu province on 31 July, 2005.

The HRC's decision was issued 15 years later after the trial had started at the national level. Madame president, the Centre for Human Rights calls on the HRC to urge the government of the DRC to swiftly reopen investigations and to prosecute and punish those responsible for the assassination and to submit a report on the implementation of the decision by 6 May 2021. Thank you.